



An hundred, threescore
and fiftene Homelyes or
Sermons, vppon the Actes
of the Apostles, written by Saint
Luke: made by Radulpe Gualthere
Tigurine, and translated out of
Latine into our tongue,
for the commoditie of
the Englishe
reader.

JOHN. I.
Beholde the Lambe of God that taketh awaye
the sinnes of the worlde.

Seene and allowed, according to the Queenes
Majesties Inuincions.

Anno Domini.
1572.



ECCLESIASTICVS.X.

The glory of the riche, of the honorable, and of
the poore, is the feare of God.



In blasoning I haue no skill:
But yet I say thys of good will.

*THE Poesie in the Garter set,
that closeth in your Armes:
Will keepe your friends, confounde your foes,
and shielde you from all harmes.
Perfourmde (my Lorde) for otherwise,
in Garters wryt alone,
And not in hart, what shamefull fruites
it yeeldes, we see echeone.
If worthies erst, now wofull wightes,
had marked well the same:
They might haue sit in honors seate
which now we haue lost their name.*

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

and his verye good Lorde, Fraunces Earle of Bedforde, *Knight of the most Noble order of the Garter*, and one of the Lordes of the Queenes Maiesties most honorable priuie Counsell : Grace and peace from God the Father, with all encrease of temporall dignitie and honor.



Y VERY GOOD LORD,
sundry menne haue sundry meanings in dedycating their studyes and traueyles to such men of honor as you are. Some seeke their friendshippe and good will, some augmentation of lyuing, some authoritie to commend and sette foorth their woorkes and labours, some one thing, some another. And I haue herein beene ledde with none of these considerations. For your honors beneuolence and friendship, I long sitthence well founde and prooued, which gaue me the best part of that exhibition, wherby I lyued in Italie three or foure yeares together, and whereby also I lyue at this daye the better: I meane the experience and knowledge which I learned in that space. And mannes allowaunce or authoritie, the maiestie of the matter that I offer vnto your honour needeth not, which (for that it is the worde of God almightie) is so farre from taking any authoritie of man, that rather man should haue no authority at all, if it were not, & especially men in authority such as you are, of whome God sayth, *Per me Reges regnant.* &c. Otherwise in respect of mine owne simple handling thereof, I must plainely confesse, that it hath neede of the meanest and simplest mans allowance that is. As for lyuing I haue not hitherto greatly gaped after, as knowing I haue more than eyther

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

I euer made great suite for, or can well deserue: my small sufficiencye, and the great charge of Ministerie committed vnto me, being well weighed. Mine onely intent in this simple labour of mine was, to shewe my selfe some maner of wayes not vnmindefull of your Lordshippes liberalitie so longe agoe bestowed vpon me, nor of that great humanitye which the same vsed about a nine yeres past, twise in one Lent at the Court, being then at White Hall, towarde so poore a man as I, preuenting my bashfull nature and slackenesse of speach towarde my superiors, with such curteous affabilitie, that among the manifold experiments which I had eftsoones before seene in you, of a noble and gentle nature, I iudged this not one of the least. For true Nobilitie consisteth not somuch in the goodes of fortune, gorgeous apparell, and proude and hauty lookes and behauior, as in courteous countenance, and other vertuous qualities of the minde, the verye true implementes and furniture of a right Courtier. And in whom soeuer these qualities are to be found, he may truely be called Nobilis. But peraduenture your Honor will say, my gift is the lesse thankeworthy, the longer your good desertes towarde mee, haue bene forgotten. Verilye, my good Lorde, it was alwayes no lesse truely, than commonly sayde, of such exercises and enterprises, as this of mine is, *Sat cito si sat bene*. And to forget a benefite or good turne, of all other vnkindenesses is the woorst. For vnkinde he is that denyeth a good turne receyued. Vnkinde also he is that will not acknowledge it: & further, he is vnkinde that doth not requite it if he be able: But of all other, he is most vnkinde that forgetteth it. And for prooffe that I neuer forgat your honors good will & friendship, I could shewe you the three bookes of Machiauelles discourses translated by me out of Italian into Englishe, more than four-

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The Epistle Dedicatorie.

tene yeares past, which I thought to haue presented vnto your Honour, but was stayed therefrom, partly bicause I hearde the worke inueighed against at Paules crosse, as a treatise unworthy to come abroade into mennes handes, and partly for that I hoped still to haue some other matter more plausible and acceptable to gyue vnto the same. Albeit to confesse a truth, I heard no such stronge reasons alleaged against the booke, but they myght (as I thought) with ease ynough haue beene answered, although the Inueigher was himselfe a discourser. In deede I suspected mine owne rude and vnripe translation, and therfore I was the easlier induced to suppress it. Therfore with such men of Honor as you are, which (as Seneca sayeth) vse to keepe no kalender of the benefites that they bestowe, and as Christ sayth, let not their left hande knowe what their right doth, but looke for their reward in the world to come: these fewe words I hope, or rather I am sure, may suffise for answere. Albeit, I see not but as the same Seneca sayth also, beneficium reddidit, qui libenter debet. And for my parte I shall alwayes gladly confesse, that I am more bounden vnto your Honor, than I am lyke at anye time to make satisfaction for. This booke which I haue here translated, shall for many skilles I trust, be welcome vnto your Honor. First, bicause it is the Actes of the Apostles, which conteyne in them the infallible and vndoubted wordes of lyfe and saluation, and a true hystorie of those thinges which the Apostles did and taught after Christes ascention. Secondly, for the wryters sake which was S. Luke, whose praise is in the Gospell. Thirddie, for his sake to whome Luke did dedicate it, which was Theophylus, a noble manne and of authoritie, but (which commendation farre passeth all other) a sincere louer and faithfull setter forth of Gods true religion and honour. I would make comparison betwene you, if I spake of your Honor

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to others and not to you, for so perhaps shoulde I not incurre so much suspition of flatterie, as to prayse you to your face. Last of all, for his sake which by his learned commentaries vpon diuers partes of the scripture, hath deserued so well of all vnfeyned Christians, but specially in these Homelyes of his, written vpon the Actes, wherein he hath both most plainly and soundely opened the greatest misteries, and controuersies of these dayes, most meete and necessarie for euerye true Christian to knowe. Of whome I will speake no further, least in perusing the worke, your Lordship may finde, howe farre his desertes shall passe all praise that I am able to giue him: and considering that the reuerende Father in God the Bishop of Norwich nowe liuing, hath made certaine learned Verses in Latine, which are printed in the forefront of his booke, in commendation of the same. Why your Lordship should accept it, bicause it is by me translated, there is no cause. For I am, inutilis seruus, and haue done but my duetie (if happily I haue done so much) in respect eyther of the seruice I owe vnto our Englishe Church in generall, or to your Honor in perticular. And therfore being so many wayes bounde vnto your Honor as I am, I finde no remedie, but to desire I may yet further be bounde vnto the same. And this is as Tullie interpreteth the matter, I will speake it in his woordes, animi ingenui, cui multum debeas eidem velle plurimum debere. Hereby therefore shall your honor binde mee the more vnto you, if you accept and thinke well not of the worke for my sake, but contrary wise of me for the workes sake, and for my poore good willes sake, which finde my selfe so estreighted with the consideration of your merites towards mee, and with the slender amends that I am able to make againe for the same, that I am driuen to Aeschines shift, sometyme Scholler vnto Socrates. He being of himselfe but a pore yong man, & not able

worthily

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worthily to recompence Socrates for the learning that he had gotten by him, and perceyuing diuers other of Socrates Schollers did gratifie him wyth sundrie riche and sumptuous presentes: Sir (sayth he) I haue no meete or worthie thing to present your worship with, and hereby most of all perceiue I, how poore I am, therfore I giue vnto you that onely thing that I haue, which is my selfe. This I beseech you (sayth he) take in good part. Nowe surely (quoth he) what else can this be, but a verie great present and gift, vnlesse perhaps thou make little or no account of thy selfe. Thus trusting my poore present shall be none otherwise receyued, at your honors hande, than was Aeschines at Socrates. I most humbly commend mee vnto the same, beseeching almightie God for Christ his sake, to giue you a lyfe wherein you maye long defende and maintaine his honour and glory. At Herne the xxj. of Aprill. 1572.

Your Honors most bounden, Iohn
Bridges Vicare of Herne.



The Translatour to the Christian Reader.



Amonge the manyfolde and subtile policies that the newe broched Diuines (I meane such as haue crept out of the schole of Thomas Aquinas, Iohn Duns, Occham, Dorbell, and such other Doctors) haue deuised for the maintenance and vpholding of their kingdome, there was neuer any one of more efficacie and force for that purpose, than to haue the people kept from reading the holy Scriptures of God in their owne proper tongue and language. And yet because they shoulde haue other matter ynough, to occupie their heades and eyes vpon, they inuented a booke called the golden Legende, the anthur whereof vndoubtedly had both a leaden mouth and an yron face, as Lodouicus Viues a learned Spaniarde did very well perceyue and testifie. To this they ioyned their Festiual, and such like bookes, (or to vse their owne terme more truely than they doe) bible babble, stuffed with most monstrous and impudent forgeries, some of them so dishonest, that it woulde and did abhorre manye christians eares to heare them. And to this ende also they sette vp in euerye Church and Chappell such blockishe and stony scholermasters, as coulde and did teach nothing else but lightnesse and vanitie, lyes and errors. And to be bryefe, whatsoeuer mannes ydle brayne coulde deuise, whatsoeuer anye Monke or Friers grosse Minerua could forge or inuent, though it were no better than Amadis de Gaule, the foure sonnes of Amon, the tales of Robin Hood, and such other like fables, yet were they thought very trimme and gaye geare to occupie the peoples eares withall. Yea, had they bene more fabulous than these (if more might haue bene) they shoulde haue bene borne and suffered, rather than the holy Scriptures in such a tongue as the people might haue vnderstande. For this cause, whosoever in consideration that the people were thus led about in the blinde mases of mannes inuentions, woulde haue translated any peece of Scripture or other fruitefull treatise into the Englishe tongue, for their brilitie and edification, he and all his wytyngs were iudged to be burned as hereticall. For (say they) the laye people had bookes good ynough for them set open in euerye Church, meaning their carued and painted Puppetrie, and woulde suffer them to reade vpon none other. Then also were hatched and maintained such straunge paradoxes and opinions as these: *Ignorance is the mother of deuotion: The Scriptures make heretikes: The Church cannot erre: The laye folke must not medle with Scriptures: We will beleue as our forefathers haue done*, meaning those that liued not past thre or fouer ages befoze, and such as had bene fedde with like acornes and swill, as they had bene vsed to, and had neuer tasted one morsell of the swete bzeade of Gods eternall and liuely worde. And although these things be well ynough knowne vnto the learned, so that they neede no such slender remembrances as these of mine are, yet for the vnlearneds sake, for whose cause I chiefly toke paines to put this booke in Englishe, I will shewe (by Gods helpe) both by Scriptures, apparaunt reasons, and aunient Doctors, that these newe Doctors in this doing wrought altogether agaynst Gods forbode. And yet woulde I haue no man to looke that I shoulde fully shewe and declare all the testimonies that might be brought for proufe of any part of my triple diuision. For so might I write not an aduertisement for the vnskilfull, but a worke and treatise, which in quantitie might match or excēde the translation it selfe. As touching Scriptures, the newe Doctors and we also agree herein, that whatsoeuer is in eyther of the Testaments, the olde or the new, concerning god maners and holy conuersation, it all serueth indifferentlye, for all times and ages. Therfore of consequence it must also serue for vs. But in the olde Testament the fathers taught their children and families the lawes and rules of both the Tables, that is to say, their duties aswell vnto God, as vnto man. Ergo, we also must doe the like. Moses receyued the commaundementes to teache them to the people, which he faithfullye and trulye did, appoynting them to trayne and bring vp their youth and posteritie in the same, not onely making them to learne them by rote, like Dawes, Pyes, and Poppingayes, but opening and declaring vnto them the sense and meaning aswell of their feastes and ho-
lye

to the Reader.

lye dayes which God did institute, as of their sacramentes of Circumcision and Passover. These be his wordes: Harken o Israel, the Lord our God is Lord onely. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine hart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy might. And these wordes which I commaunde thee this daye shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt shewe them vnto thy children, and shalt talke of them when thou art at home in thine house, and as thou walkest by the way, and when thou tvest downe, and when thou risest vp, and thou shalt binde them for a signe vpon thine bande, and they shall be as frontlets betwene thine eyes, and thou shalt wyre them vpon thy postes, and vpon thy gates. And in the same chapter it foloweth further: And when thy sonne asketh thee in time to come saying: what meane these testimonies, ordinaunces, and lawes, which the Lord God hath commaunded you? Then shalt thou saye vnto thy sonne: wee were Pharaos bondmen in Egypt, and the Lord brought vs out of Egypt with a mightye bande. And the Lord shewed signes and wonders great and cruell vpon Egypt, vpon Pharaos, and vpon all his housholde, before our eyes. And brought vs out from thence to bring vs in, and to giue vs the lande which hee swaie vnto our fathers. &c. The holy prophet Dauid also speaking of the same commaundement of God declared by the mouth of Moses, sayth: Heare my lawe, o my people, encline your eares vnto the wordes of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a Parable, I will declare hard sentences of olde, which we haue hearde and knowne, and such as our fathers haue tolde vs. That wee shoulde not hide them from the children of the generations to come, but to shewe the honour of the Lord, his mightie and wonderfull workes that he hath done. He made a couenant with Iacob, and gaue Israel a lawe, which he commaunded our forefathers to teach their children, that their posteritie might knowe it, and the children that were yet vborne. To the intent that when they came vp, they might shewe their children the same. Here mayst thou see, O good Reader, that the true Christians and saythfull among the Israelytes, as they were commaunded, euen so they taught and instructed their families and children in the wayes and workes of the Lord. So that of them it coulde not be verified as yet, that they had shut vp the kingdome of heauen from menne, neyther entring in themselves, neyther suffering other that woulde, neyther that they were blinde leaders of the blinde. For those breedes of Pharisees, Saducees, and Essenes, were not hatched till many hundred yeares after, which when Christ came, had turned godlynesse into gaine, and religion into rechelesnesse, as the like swarmes of religious (commonly called, but in deede most superstitious) do amongst vs, and yet doe where they are still suffered. And because they feare that the Lord in his zeale will whip such wicked merchants as they are, out of his Church in all places, as it appeareth very well he doth daile, his name be glorified therefore, this maketh them to fozme, fret and fume, and to take counsaile against the Lord, and against his annointed. This maketh them stirre coales, and to play Ker, this causeth them to imprison, to hang, to drawe, to drowne, to burne, to cut mens tongues out, to gagge them that they shall not speake, to banishe and proscrib, saying they can no longer prescribe, but verily all in vaine, for as much as there is no wisdom, counsaile, or deuise that can preuaile against the Lord. But let vs returne to the holy prophet Dauid, whose sayings and testimonies (because they haue alwayes bene of such worthy estimation in the Church of God) let vs bring yet furthermore to confirme the truth of our assertion. In the lxxxj. psalme he bringeth in God thus speaking to the people of Israel: Heare o my people, and I assure thee o Israel, if thou wilt hearken vnto mee, there shall no straunge God. &c. If God speake here to all the people in generall, high and lowe, riche and poore one with another, then of congruence belongeth it to all people in generall to hearken and carie awaye what is sayde. But howe shall they heare, if they haue not his worde, marke his saying: If thou wilt hearken. And it must be vnto him we must hearken. For whosoener speaketh not as he doth, must not be hearde, though it were an Angell from heauen, as Paule sayth: yea, if Christ woulde come and preach any other Gospell, than he hath already preached, we ought not, as some of the olde wryters saye, to heare him. Howe much lesse then ought we to hearken what these newe Gospellers say, who speake *Αἰσχρολογία*, contorted, wrested and peruerse things, altogether repugnant to Gods worde and saying. The prophetes also in all their sermons and wrytings, crie vnto the people, audite verbum domini, heare the worde of the Lord. For here is no state, or degre, no age, or sexe excluded, but all must heare. For populus and turba, as is often read, in the olde and newe Testament comprehendeth promiscuam multitudinem, the whole multitude one with another. Therefore no sort is excepted from hearing. But me thinketh I heare what one of these newe Di-

Deut. 6.

Psal. 78.

Math. 23.

Math. 25.

They began in the dayes of Ioannes Hircanus high Bishop of the Jewes about an hundred and thirtie yeares before Christ was borne.

Prou. 21.

Galat. 1.

Actes. 10.

Math. 15.

Math. 15.

1. Cor. 7.
Math. 16.

Actes. 17.
1. Theſſ. 12.

Math. 11.
Luc. 10.

uinea replieth: Sir (ſayth he) when did we forbid any kinde of perſons from hearing our Sermons? No in dæde, but when men came to heare you, they coulde not heare the worde of the Lorde, but doctrines that were the preceptes of men, wherewith Chriſt ſayth, you worſhip him in vaine. It had bene ſomewhat tollerable, to haue forbidden men the reading of the Scriptures, ſo that you had taught them nothing but the ſcriptures, as you ought to haue done. But to preach your owne fantaſies and inuentions, and to forbidde men to ſearch the ſcriptures, which Chriſt ſo earneſtly commaundeth them to doe, was too too presumptuous for a ſeruant to doe againſt his Lordes commaundement. Howbeit, you ſaye Chriſt and the Pope haue but one Conſiſtoye, and therefore becauſe he commaundeth it, you thinke you may ſafely doe it. But S. Paule aunſwereth all theſe pretie obiections at once, ſaying: Bee ye not the ſeruants of men. Howbeit, hereto you will ſay the Pope is not purus homo, a pure man. And that I am ſure all that knowe what he is, will eaſily graunt you. Surely, S. Paule was ſo little offended that the Theſſalonians ſearched the Scriptures, to ſee whether his preaching agreed therewith, yea or no, that he rather much liked and commended them for their doing. But you in no poynnt reſemble Pauls condicions, but in perſecuting Chriſt his Church. The ſame David likewiſe in his. xlii. Pſalme, hath matter ynough, though there were none other any where elſe both to proue howe neceſſarye the worde of God is for all men to knowe, and alſo to aunſwere the obiections of all our newe Diuines. The lawe of the Lorde (ſayth he) is an vndefiled or perſite lawe conuertyng the ſoule. The teſtimonie of the Lorde is ſure, and giueth wiſedome vnto the ſimple. He calleth the lawe perſyte, to aunſwere thoſe controllers which ſaye the Scriptures are not ſufficient, and therefore haue ſorged a ſort of vntwitten verities, (ſo they call them) which they haue matched in authoritie with the Scriptures, and haue commaunded men payne of death to receyue and beleue them before the Scriptures. He ſayth, it conuerteth or turneth the ſoule, that is to ſay, it maketh him that readeth them a newe man, a repentant perſon, a ſaythfull beleuer, and a godly liuer. So farre it is from peruerting or corrupting any godly ſtudent thereof. He calleth it a ſure and faithfull teſtimonie of the Lorde, whereas mannes policies, counſels and deuises are alwayes vncertaine, changeable and vnſure. It giueth wiſedome vnto the ſimple. Why then ſhoulde they be kept from it. Verily this hath bene Gods praſtiſe in all ages, as appeareth by all hystories, that he hath reuealed his worde and will to no kinde of people ſoner, than vnto thoſe that are ſimple, as may be ſcene by thoſe thanks that our Sauour Chriſt gaue to God his father in the behalfe of his Diſciples being but ſimple Clarkeſ, ſaying: I thanke thee O God, father of heauen and earth, for that thou haſt hiddeſe theſe things (verily the vnderſtanding of his kingdome) from the wiſe, that is to ſaye, the great Doctors, in their owne conceyte, and in the worldes iudgement, and haſt reuealed them vnto the ſimple, that is, to the vnlearned and deſpyſed wightes of this worlde. For ſo doth Chryſoſtome expounde the wordes: Ruſtical people and Ideotes (ſayth he), were illuminated, perſons of ſmall account in the worlde, or in the knowledge of God, but not of obſtinacie but ignorance. If our new Diuines would admit theſe ſayings of Chriſt, and Chryſoſtome, they ſhoulde ſone perceyue howe vncertainly they ſpeake, and alſo howe vnlike the olde Doctors, whyle they raue and ſare ſo ſowle wyth poore Artiſicers and Craftſmen, whome it hath pleaſed God in theſe dayes, ſo to enriche with his ſpirite, that when they haue bene called before theſe our newe Rabbinis, they haue ſhewed more true Diuinitie, than all the whole Synagoge of them were able. I report me to Eusebius Eccleſiaſticall hystory, and to our owne, entituled the Actes and Monumentes of the Church. But David goeth on ſaying: The ſtatutes of the Lorde are right, and reioyce the heart: the commaundement of the Lorde is pure, and giueth light to the eyes. The feare of the Lorde is cleane and endureth for euer: the iudgements of the Lorde are true and righteous altogether. More to be deſired are they than golde, yea, than much ſine golde: ſweeter alſo than hony and the bony combe. Moreover, by them is thy ſeruant taught. What? I warraunt you, this olde Diuine David neuer ment that they taught eyther heretie or error. In diuers other places of his Pſalter, maye be ſcene the earneſt exhortations that he maketh to all the people, to heare the worde of God, as in the. xlii. Pſalme, O heare ye this all ye people, ponder it with your eares, all ye that dwell in the worlde. High and lowe, rich and poore, one with another. What ſhoulde they heare? euen that that immediately folloiweth, bowe his mouth ſhall ſpeake of wiſedome, and his heart muſe of vnderſtanding. Here are none excluded from hearing what David ſhall ſay,

but

to the Reader.

but such as dwell in Vtopia. The Duties therefore that will barre any dwellers in this worlde from hearing or reading of Dauid, must there go preache this doctrine. Agayne, *Where withall shall a yong man cleanse his way? euen by ruling himselfe after thy worde.* Agayne, *Thy worde is a lanterne to my feete, and a light vnto my pathes.* Agayne: *When thy worde goeth forth, it giueth light and vnderstanding euen vnto the simple.* Agayne: *Kings of the earth, and all people, Princes and all Iudges of the worlde, yong men and maydens, olde men and children, prayse the name of the Lord.* Here by an enumeration of all states and degrees, sexes and ages, may we see that none are secluded from praying the Lord, which then is done most acceptablye, when we sing prayse vnto him, as the same Dauid sayth, with vnderstanding, which vnderstanding we can not haue without his worde. In synite more places there be in the Psalter to this effect, as the diligent Reader thereof shall finde, whereof this is one verie notable, and therefore not to be omitted: *Out of the moutbes of very babes & sucklings, hast thou ordeyned strength, that thou mightest still the enemy and the auenger.* It is the more notable, for that Christ alleageth it in the xxj. of Mathewe, agaynst the Scribes and Phariseyes, in defence of the people, which so thankfully welcommed and receyued him into Jerusalem, in the same sense that it is here brought for. But let vs now come to the testimonies of the newe Testament. Our Saviour Christ hauing to doe with those Jewes which of all other in the worlde at that time, most gloried in the knowledge of God and his religion, because they had Bishoppes, whose succession, they coulde shewe by order euen from Aaron, and therefore had antiquitie ynough, hauing Scribes, Phariseyes, Sadduceyes, Essenes, Nobles, Communes, and all the worlde on their side: yet did he plainly tell them that they erred, and were deceyued, for that they vnderstode not the Scriptures. For to the Sadduceyes which allowed no part of the olde Testament, but the booke of Moses, denying the resurrection, for that they imagined (if there were any) men shoulde knowe their wiues, as they had before done in the worlde, as appeareth by their captious and foolish demaunde, Christ answered: *ye erre, not vnderstanding the Scriptures and power of God.* Where we maye plainly learne that ignorance in the Scripture is the cause of error, contrary to these newe Duties assertion, that saye: *Ignorance is the mother of deuotion.* Whereas true deuotion cannot be without the true vnderstanding of Gods will, and his will by no meanes ordinary can be vnderstanded, but by his worde. Therefore to auoyde errour, it is moste mete that people haue the Scriptures to searce and vnderstande the will of God by. Another time, hauing to doe with the Phariseyes also (as these two sectes of men were the greatest assaillantes that Christ euer had, whereby we learne it is no newe practise that they most persecute Christs Church, that challenge most authoritie and learning in the same) he bade them for that they seemed to haue such exact knowledge in the worde of God, and yet knew not that he was that Messias and Saviour, that God had promised them, to searce better in the Scriptures, and they shoulde finde that the Scriptures in all places, did testifye and beare witnesse that he was the same. Whereby Christ plainly giueth vs to vnderstande that without the Scriptures we cannot truly knowe him. These two places declare sufficiently howe necessarye the Scriptures are for all that will knowe Christ. We will adde two other testimonies to the two howe profitable they are. S. Paule in his Epistle to the Romanes, sayth: *What soeuer thinges haue bene written afore time, they haue bene written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, we might haue hope.* They are not written for Monkes and Friers onely to pore vpon, but for our learning, that is, for as many as professe Christ, which thing being spoken by Paule of the olde Testament (for as yet the newe was not written) howe much more learning may we nowe receyue, hauing the writings of the Euangelistes and Apostles ioyned all together? Likewise in his seconde Epistle to Timothie the thirde Chapter, he sayth: *All Scripture inspired of God is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct and amende in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfecte, instructed vnto all good workes.* This epitheton or adiectiue, inspired of God, quite wyppeth awaye all vntowritten verities, all mannes gloses, and traditions, all sayned visions and myracles, such as are to be founde in Gregorie the Popes dialogues, and throughout the workes of our newe Duties. Since therefore the Scripture teacheth, reproveth, correcteth and amendeth, maketh men perfecte and furnished with all good workes, what thing then can there be deuised in all the worlde of more profite and vtilitie? Had I not bounde my selfe

Psal. 119.

Psal. 148.

Psal. 47.

Psal. 8.
Math. 11.

Math. 22.
Marc. 11.
Luc. 20.

Iohn. 5.

Rom. 15.

1. Tim. 2.

Actes. 10.
Rom. 2.

Math. 5.
Mar. 4.
Luc. 8.
Math. 19.
Mar. 11. 13.
Marc. 4.
Esay. 52.

by a partition, to proue by apparant reason also the truth of this assertion, I shoulde neede no further to trouble epyther my selfe with more wryting, or you with more reading. But such promises as these we are bounde to performe. First therefore this is one reason verpe euident & playne, that seeing our Saviour Christ (as Paule sayth) woulde haue all men to be saued, and to come to the knowledge of the truth: and for that ende did and suffered whatsoeuer he did and suffred, while he liued here on earth: the meane whereby men shoulde attaine vnto that truth and saluation, which are Gods holy Scriptures, ought by no meanes to be kept from them. The practise of our Saviour, admitting all men to his sermons and familiar communication, Publicanes, souldiours, artificers, Phariseys, harlots, strayed sheepe, & vnrightheous persons, yea, keeping company most with such, abundantly proue the same. And bicause the scriptures as teaching y way to come vnto god best of all other things, are meetest for such straglers, & all men by testimonie of the same scripture, of their owne nature & disposition are such straglers, therefore ought all straglers, that is to say, all men to haue the law & the scriptures, wherby they may both see howe they haue strayed out of the way, and how to retorne into the same againe. The Maior is proued by Christ, Math. 22. Iohn. 5. & by the olde Doctors, as we shall see when we come to the last part of our partition. The Minor God himselfe maketh Genes. 8. where he sayth: *The imagination of mans heart is euill euen from his youth.* The wrytings of the Prophetes and Apostles, doe inculcate and repeate nothing more. The places are infinite, therefore I quote them not. The commaundement of Christ a little before his ascention bidding his Apostles to go into all the world, and teach the gospell to all Nations, doth further proue it, as their practise also declared, teaching the same some while to Tentmakers, some while to Tanners, some while to women that were Dyers, other whiles to Souldiers, yea, at all times, to all states and degrees of persons. And whereas Christ was bozne, dyed and was buryed, rose againe, and ascended into heauen for all men, and shall come agayne to receyue all states and degrees of men, for with God there is no respect of persons, but in euery Nation, he that seareth him, and workerh righteouseffe, is accepted of him. What are we that we shoulde withstande god, and kepe this knowledge from any kinde of menne? What meaneth it mozeouer that Christ will haue his light to shine throughout his house, that he will haue his worde preached on the house toppes, that the light of his gospell must not be put vnder a bushell: why doth he many times conclude his sermons thus generally: *He that hath eares to heare, let him heare?* Why doth god cry vnto the Prophets, bidding them to speake out, and exalt their voyces like to a Trumpet, and to tell his people their wickednesse? Christ suffred all men, Tinkers, Taylers, Carpenters, Coblers, Balons, and Bicklayers, to heare his voyce, and will these Comptrollers barre them from reading his booke? But I wote what a newe deuine will saye. In the primitive Church when the scriptures were extant for all men to reade, what a swarme of heretikes bredde they which disturbed the whole church: What heresie hath there bene at any time so absurde, but it hath had his colour of maintenance out of the Scripture? Sir, by the way, I will take it for graunted, that you say the Scriptures were extant in the primitive Church, for all men to reade, as in dede they were. And so was it gods will they shoulde be, and for that cause did the holy ghost moue the Euangelistes and the Apostles, to wryte the gospels and the Epistles in the Greeke tongue, which then was vniuersallpe vnderstode of most Nations, yet notwithstanding, these heresies bredde (as you say) the primitive church neuer called the scriptures in, ne yet forbade any kinde of people the reading of them. You haue done both without all example of the primitive church, whereby may and doe appeare your newe proceedings. But nowe to aunswere question with question: what heresie I praye you euer was there, but the same hath bene confuted by the scriptures? Bicause some men haue misused the scriptures, shall all menne be depriued of them: shall the Bees be kept fro gathering hony of the swete flowers, bicause spiders make popson of them: shall all they that can vse wine and beade to chare and strengthen mans heart, giuing god thanks for them, taste or assay none of them, bicause a great many abuse them to surfetting & drunbennesse? Lay the fault where it is, in the men, not in the things that they misuse. What fault is in the money that lyeth and rusteth in the cofer of the couetous? What in the knife or sworde that killeth a bodye? Ptholomeus Philadelphus thought himselfe very well occupied (as in dede he was) when he caused y booke of Moses

and

to the Reader.

and the prophets to be translated into the Græke tongue by threescore and tenne learned men, called the seauentie Translatoꝝ or Interpreters, two hundred threescore and seauentene yeares before Christ was boꝛne. An hundred and fower and twenty yeares after Christs ascention, Aquila a Jewe, in the dayes of Adrian the Emperoꝝ, translated them againe. After him Theodotion in Commodus dayes. Then Symachus vnder Seuerus. Then was there an other translation founde at Hierusalem without anye name, called the common translation. After this againe Origene toke great paynes to coꝛrect the seauentie Translatoꝝ, adding of his owne where he thought they were not full, and taking from them where he sawe redundance and superfluitie. All these no doubt labouring to elucidate and make playner, as much as in them lay, the foꝛmer translations. Yea, S. Hierome after all this, was not astrayde to translate the whole Bible againe, into the Latine tongue, which is perished. He translated diuers other treatises also out of Græke into Latine, as Didimus wrote touching the deitie of the holy ghost. Epiphanius bishop of Cyprus Epistle to Iohn the Patriarch of Ierusalem, and diuers other such. And because none shall saye, what maketh this foꝛ the translating of the Bible into other moze vulgar tongues, as into the Englishe, &c. Foꝛ they can well admit the Hebrew, Græke, and Latine tongues, and any other that the people vnderstande not, therefore S. Hierome translated the Bible into the Sclauonian tongue, that is to say, into his owne native countrie tongue. We haue therefore antiquitie ynough on our side foꝛ pꝛoofe of our diuers translations. Pꝛyther did he euer feare or make account of such inconueniencies, as these new Diuines pretende, spring of such translations, or any thing regarded the sharpe censure and checks of diuers Comptrollers, that founde fault with his doings, but helde on and continued to the ende translating, wꝛyting, and endyting, sending his bookes onewhile to virgins, one other whyle to married women, sometime to widowes, but euer to one kinde of person or other, being still exercised and occupied in such doings. And I marueyle why these men should be so offended, that euery Nation should haue the scriptures in their owne tongue, seeing in some places of their wꝛytings they make the holy ghost the authoꝛ of this opinion and iudgement. Doth not Aeneas Syluius which was afterwarde Pope, and called Pius secundus, tell vs, that when about the yeare of our Loꝝd. 900. there fell a great contention at Rome, whether the Hungarians should haue their seruice in their owne tongue, yea, or no: that there was a voyce hearde from heauen, saying: *Let euery thing that hath breath, praise the Lord, and euery tongue giue thanks vnto his holy name?* Whereupon (sayth this Aeneas) the Councell brake vp, and the contention surceased. So that by this stoꝛy, whosoener denyeth Gods people Gods seruice in their owne proper tongue, resist Gods ordinance and commaundement. These men count it a great absurditie, that a woman, a childe, or an artificer, should talke of the Gospell, or of the Scripture. And yet many times we may heare women, childeꝛen, and artificers, vnderstande moze of Gods holy mysteries, than a number of some ruddy Rabbines, that notwithstanding loke very high and lofty. Moses was not of this minde and opinion. Foꝛ when Iehosuah his seruant would haue had him to foꝛbid Heldad and Medad from pꝛophetizing, he answered, *would God that all the Lordes people coulde pꝛophecie, and that he would giue his spirite vnto them all.* Christ commaundeth little childeꝛen to be suffered to come vnto him, and not to be foꝛbidden. But who maye not moze iustly thinke it a greater absurditie, to heare women, childeꝛen, and artificers patter their Pater noster in a tongue that they so little vnderstande, that Cardinall Ascanius Parot at Rome was as wise as they. Yea, the Crowe that saluted Augustus, coulde saye his Aue Cæsar, better than they coulde their Aue Maria. And surely if the newe Diuines godly intention may not in this case helpe at a pinch, they may also saye and say truly, as an other Crowe did at another time, *we haue lost all our labour.* So little doth God allowe such godly intention. Foꝛ he biddeth we should not be like Horse and Mule, in whome there is none vnderstanding. When seeing we haue the Scriptures, aswell of the olde Testament as the newe, so full and whole on our side, seeing Christ commaundeth vs to search the Scriptures, seeing S. Paule sayth, *they are written for our learning and instruction,* seeing we haue the example of the Primitive Church, permitting all men to haue and reade the Scriptures in all tongues, seeing we haue so many translations of the Scriptures, I meane of olde tyme, I speake not of those in the Englishe tongue, in Ethelitanes dayes, and in the Saxons

tongue,

Psal. 150.

Numer. 11.

Marc. 10.

Psal. 31.

Math. 2.
Luc. 2.
Math. 14. 15.
Luc. 5.

Math. 9. 20.
Math. 8.
Luc. 5.
Math. 27.
Mar. 12.
Luc. 20.
Math. 26.
Mar. 14.
Luc. 22.
John. 18.
Math. 27.
John. 6.

Colof. 3.

ix. Homely
vpon the Epi-
stle to the Co-
lossians.

tongue, ne yet of that gift of tongues giuen to the Apostles, to the intent that all Nations might heare the great workes of God in their owne language, seeing there is nothing in the Scriptures, eyther threatened or promised, but it appertayneth to all men in all ages, nothing done by Christ of olde, but the same in one respect or other is daile done. For Christ is newly borne among vs euen at this day. There are Herodes that goe about to murder him in his Cradle euen at this day. He notwithstanding groweth in fauour with God and men euen at this day: He healeth all maner of maladies, Leprouse, Demoniacks, Dumbe, Blinde, Deafe, Dropsies, Palsies, bloudy fluxes at this day, so that we say, *some of David haue mercy vpon vs, and Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make vs whole.* Yea, he rayseth men from death to life againe by the power of his worde euen at this day: He teacheth, threatneth, promisseth, comforteth euen at this day. There are Jewes which will not suffer their bayled Moses to peld to his brightnesse in these dayes: He hath Scribes, Phariseys, and Sadducees, that lye in wayte to catch and entangle him in his talke euen nowe a dayes also. He hath more than one Annas and Caiphas to buye, and more than one Iscariot to sell him at this daye. Herode, Pylate, and their Crewes want not to mocke, whisp, and crucifie him, yea, to keepe him downe also in his graue, that he rise not againe, euen at this day. And yet all this notwithstanding, he hath still also at this day his little flocke that doth and will depende vpon him, saying: *Lord, to whome shall we go? Thou hast the wordes of eternall life.* Therefore whatsoeuer the newe Diuinitie say to the contrary, let vs still reade the Scriptures, and sticke to that olde Diuinitie. But bicause many men are ledde not so much eyther with reason or testimonies of Scriptures, as with authoritie of Doctors, to fulfill my promise, and some deale to satisfie (if happily it may be) their preposterous zeale and peruerse iudgement, I will shewe also that the best and soundest of the olde Doctors, haue alwayes bene of this opinion, that all people at all times ought to haue the scriptures in their owne tongue. And if any man as delighting in a worke of supererrogation, that is to say, for a man to doe more than he hath bounde himselfe to, or needeth, shall require so much. I will also by the olde Doctors aunswere the objections of such as thinke the scriptures ought not to bee read of all men, bicause of the difficultie of them, and that varietie of translations cause and breede errors. And first we will begin with the Doctors of the Latine Church, not for worthynesse eyther of life or learning, that hath bene at anye time in them, more than in the Grekes. For verily the Grekes are able to shewe as many worthy writers of their Church, as the Latines can by any meanes, if I say not more: but bicause perhaps some Romanist or Latine man may hit vpon this writing, which (if he be partially affected toward the Latine Doctors) may first see what the opinion of the Latine Church was in this poynt, by one of the most approuedst Doctors in the same Church. S. Hierome vpon these wordes of Paule to the Colossians, *Let the worde of Christ dwell plentifully among you,* sayth thus: *By this place it is declared, that euen the laye people ought to haue the wordes of Christ among them, not onely sufficiently, but also abundantly, and to teach and admonishe one another.* Here besides that S. Hierome permitteth the laye people to haue the Scriptures, and that plentifully, he also suffereth them to teach and instruct one another, saying moreover that it is their dutie so to doe. Chrysostome vpon the same place and wordes, sayeth euen the same thing, though in more large and ample maner: *Harken (sayth he) all ye secular people, that haue charge of wife and children, howe the Apostle commaundeth you chiefly to reade the scriptures, and that not lightly and slenderly, but with great diligence.* And a litle after that againe: *Listen (sayth he) I pray you, all you laye people, Buye you the Bible, which is the medicine of the soule: Or if you will haue nothing else, get you the newe Testament, the Gospels and Actes of the Apostles for your continuall and diligent teachers.* And by and by after he addeth: *This (sayth he) is the cause of all euill, that the scriptures are not vnderstanded.* Note well I pray you howe Chrysostome holdeth this as an vndoubted and infallible truth, that ignorance in the Scriptures is the cause of all euill. Our Countre man Beda called worshipfull (as I suppose) bicause of his great learning, and reuerende life and demeanour, is of the very same iudgement, as appeareth by that he hath written vpon the first Epistle of S. Peter the seconde Chapter. I might also here shewe howe the sayde Beda for more than nyne hundred yeares past, translated the Gospell of Saint Iohn into the Englishe tongue, and howe Constantine so greatly commended for his godlynesse, caused infinite copies of the Byble to be written and sent a-

brode into all the partes of his Emppre, long befoze that. But retorne we to Chrysostome, who many times chideth (as it wete) with his hearers, for that they glue no better heede to his sermons, sometimes againe, he prayeth and desireth them, that they woulde come oftner to them, and reade and peruse the scriptures at home at their houses, more diligently than they had vsed. Otherwhiles he aunswereth the obiections they vsed to make for their excuse. But let vs heare his owne words: Tell me (saith he) I pray you, you that stand here present, which of you can say our Psalme without the booke, if it were required of you, or any other peece of the scriptures? And he by & by maketh their obiection & answere. But (sayth he) this is your defence for all such fautes: I am (say you) no Monke, I haue wife and children, and charge of housholde, verily this is it, wherewith as it were with the plague, you warre and corrupt all thinges, because you thinke the reading of scriptures belongeth to Monkes onely, where in deepe it is much more necessary for you, than for them, for they that go abroade in the world, and daily receyue wounde vpon wound, haue more neede of Gods medicine than other men, Wherfore it is a more grienous and beynous fault, to thinke the lawe of God to be superfluous, than to be ignorant in it, for these be wordes proceeding of a diuellsbe cogitation. Hearst thou not Paule say, the scriptures are written for our correction? Thus much hath Chrysostome in his second Homelie vpon S. Mathew, & these words also to the like effect in the same place folowing. This sett (sayth he) is the working of the deuils inspiration, that will not suffer vs to loke vpon the treasure, least we should attaine to the riches therof. Therefore he perswadeth men that there is no profit vnder by reading the holy Scriptures, because he woulde see no practise followe of the hearing. Again, in his xviij. Homelie vpon the Epistle to the Hebrewes, he bringeth other like obiections, wherunto he also answereth: Thou wilt saye (sayth he) I haue not reade it, this is no excuse, but a fault. And in his xxviii. Homely vpon the Genesis, he earnestly exhorteth and counsaileth all men to the hearing & reading of the scriptures. These be his words: I pray you (sayth he) come hither oftner, and harken more diligently to the reading of the holy Scripture, and not onely when you come hither, but at home also take the holy Bible in your handes, and receyue with great studie the commoditie therein contyned. And a little after that againe. I pray you therfore (sayth he) let vs not lose so great a commoditie through our negligence, but let vs apply the reading of the holy scripture, euen at home also. Nowe if these newe Diuines, which haue gone so long disguised vnder the visar of antiquitie, will yet farther replie and saye, that the Scriptures are too difficult for all men to vnderstand, and that they are not sufficient to discusse all controuersies that may arise in the church, but that we must waite for the Oire and determiner of counsellors, or that diuersitie of translations breede obscuritie and errors among the people: we will hereto also make them an aunswere, and that out of the doctozs, that it may herein also appeare, that they doe but pretende doctozs, seing they will not yelde to the doctozs, when they heare them speake, and make so expressely against them. First touching hardnesse and difficultie, wherewith they charge the scripture. Saint Augustine in his second booke of christian doctrine and sixe chapter, sayth thus: The holye ghost hath so honorably and wholesomely tempered and qualified the holye Scriptures, that it hath put bunge away by playner places, and lothsomnesse by darker. And againe in his thirde Epistle to Volusianus, he sayth: The maner of speech, wherof the holy scripture consisteth all men may easely come vnto, although verie fewe can pearce through it, vntering the playner things therein conteyned, like a familiar friend without all coulour, to the heart as well of the vnlearned, as learned. And those things which it hideth in mysteries, it doth not set out with haughty elocution, fraying the slowe and vnlearned minde to come neere it, lyke as the poore man cometh vnto the riche, but allureth all men with lowlinesse of speeche, feeding them not onely with manifest truth, but exercising them with secret, hauing the verie same things in playner places, that it hath in harder. Cyrill in his seauenth booke against Iulian sayth: to the intent that the scriptures might be knowne to all men both small and great, they are so commodiously set forth in familiar speache, that they passe nones capacitie. Saint Hierome vpon the xix. chapter of E say sayth. It is the maner of the scriptures, after harder things, to set playner. Saint Austen in his 83. booke, and 69. question, affirmeth that circumstance of the Scriptures, openeth the sence and meaning. Tertullian in his booke against Praxeas proueth, that the rather and selder places, must be expounded by the mo, and oftner. And Chrysostome among many places, hath one verie notable in his first Homely vpon Mathew, where he sayth: The Scriptures are easie to be vnderstanded, of the bondman, of the Ploughman, of the wydowe, of the childe, and of him that seemeth to be verie slender witted. Notweist, though they will after a sort let passe other scriptures as vncomptrolled, yet Pauls writings and

Epistles of all other seeme very harde vnto them, and that they woulde seme to proue by Peters wordes in the thirde Chapter of his seconde Epistle, whereas God knoweth all other scriptures, euen the easiest are alike harde to such as Peter speaketh of. For they be vnlearned and vnconstant and fickle persons, which peruert and turne them to their owne destruction. But will you heare what Chrysostome aunswereth to this obiection, speaking of Pauls Epistle to the Romaines, in his Preface vpon the same, that you maye see there is none so pleuishe an obiection of these newe Diuines, but the same is aunswered by some olde Doctoꝝ or other, if they be well searched. Ignorance (sayth Chrysostome) is not the cause hereof (he meaneth that they vnderstode not the Epistle to the Romaines) but that they will not continually haue in their handes the writings of this holy man. For that which we our selues knowe (if peraduenture we know ought at all) we know it not by the pregnancie and goodnesse of our owne wit, but for that we be so entirely affectioned to that man, that we neuer cease reading of him. For they that loue men, knowe more of their doings than other men, as being more carefull for their louers than other are. And thereupon concluding he sayth: Wherefore if you also can finde in your hartes, earnestly and diligently to bestowe your labour in reading him, there shall bee nothing else required of you. For Christes saying is true, Seeke and you shall finde, knocke and it shall be opened vnto you. And surely Chrysostome spake not this to Priestes and religious men onely, but to all his Church of Constantinople, and vniuersally to as many as shoulde reade his workes. And he sayeth further in his. vij. homely to the Hebrewes, in reproofe of those that vsed not to looke vpon the scriptures: No man will take heede (sayth he) vnto the Scriptures. For if we woulde marke them, we shoulde not only keepe our selues from error, but deliuer other also that are deceyued out of the same, and pull them out of daunger. Moreover, vpon the seconde of Genesis the. xij. Chapter he sayth: Let vs come to the scope and marke of the holy Scripture, which expoundeth it selfe. And againe: The holy Scripture expoundeth it selfe, and suffereth not the bearer to erre. Tertullian also one of the first wyrters next the Apostles, in his Apologie for the Christians, sayth: He that willarken to the Scriptures, shall finde God, and he that will studie to vnderstand them shall be enforced to beleue them. These places of Doctoꝝ as well of the Latine Church, as of the Graeke, are sufficient ynough to teach and perswade any reasonable bodie, the iudgement that the whole Church vniuersall had, both as touching the Scriptures to be had and read of all men, and also to proue the facilitie and easinesse of them to be vnderstanded, and so consequently mine assertion, and howe Catholickely our Church doth, and like vnto the Primitive Church, in permitting all persons indifferently to haue the Scriptures to looke and reade in to their instruction and vnderstanding. And if any of these newe Diuines will not herewith be satisfied, but will yett bge custome, authoritie of Predecessors, and such lyke weake instances, for their newe Mumpsimus, rather than they will yelde to this olde Sumpsimus: then let vs aunswere them roundly thus with the wordes of S. Hierome, vpon the. ix. chap. of Ieremie, saying: Neither must the error of our parents nor forefathers be followed, but the authoritie of the scriptures, and the commaundement of God teaching vs. And though they crie out neuer so much, they haue the Scriptures, whereby to proue their opinions, which God wote many a time they apply to their purpose as handsomely as the deuill did when he reasoned with Christ in the wilderness, and as the olde and new Heretikes did and doe, which (as they say, so we likewise affirme) doe accloy the Church in daide very much: then let vs aunswere them with Tertullian saying thus, in his booke of the fleshe or true manhode that Christ toke: Let all Heretikes (sayth he) vse his scriptures, whose worlde they also vse. This shall serue for a testimonye of their condemnation, that they decke and furnishe their blasphemies with his examples. And if they will haue Councils to decyde and controll all controuersies, wherof consist they, I pray you, not of men: What are menne, such creatures as cannot erre? Then shoulde they be no men. The best Doctoꝝ in the Church, haue erred in some part or other of their writings, or at least haue thought they might erre. I reposit me else to their owne sayings in their bookes, to be founde in euery place, where they neuer arrogate to themselves anye such proude pꝛiuidge and immunitie from erring, as the late lostie Prelates of Rome hath done, but with all lowlynesse submit their writings to the Scriptures, and to those that shall see or perceyue moze in them than they haue done, yea, requirring men freely to finde fault and correct, where they haue not attayned to the truth. This woulde they neuer haue done, if they had knowne or thought they coulde not haue erred. And what one of the

Popes

In his Apologie toward the ende.

Popes can we name in the Church for this five hundred yere or more, comparable eyther in life or learning with any one of these olde Doctors, which thus modestly haue written of themselves: And shall we thinke better men than these Doctors haue met in the Councils, since their dayes: I say no more, but I woulde there had mette so good. They will yet saye, Heresies haue bene alwayes confuted in Councilles, and I saye Heresies haue bene alwayes confirmed in Councils. Did not the Council at Ariminum in Italie holde and conclude with the Arrianes: Did not the seconde Council at Ephesus, holde with Entiches: Did not the Council at Chalcedon so folowly erre, that they woulde haue giuen to Leo then Bishop of Rome, the title of supremacie, and vniuersall Bishop, which he refused, wherein surely he erred not: But what they since haue done, that by slaughter and murder, and other such vnjust meanes haue vsurped it, both heauen and earth knoweth: The Council also gathered by Cyprian at Carthage, did grieuoufly erre, enacting that they that were baptised by Heretikes, shoulde be baptised againe, before they woulde receiue them into their Church. And the Council at Constance, did moste abhominably consent in error to robbe Gods people of the one halfe of Christs sacrament. What did the late Council at Trent, being fouretyne yeaeres at the least in trauell, bying forth at length: Forsooth Horatius mountaines in Italie were great with childe, and after their harde trauell brought forth a spoule. What one error or abuse in their Church, of so many, as all the worlde nowe saith, and they (although they be impudent ynough) cannot denie, haue they reformed: Surely neuer might that worthy Bisshope of Nazianzum his saying be more truly spoken than of these Councils, If I must needes write the truth (sayth he) I neuer sawe any good ende or conclusion of these Bishops Councils, in his Epistle to Procopius the xliij. Epist. And yet they shame not still to say, the holye ghost is President of their Councils, and that he is shut in the closet of the Popes breast. But I trowe it is not that holye ghost that Christ sayth, *breatheth where it will*, for that it woulde not be so partially tyed to the Popes bosome, or that appeared vpon Christ in likenesse of a Dove. It is I beleue, that ghastly ghost the Dwle, that sate so long in the Consistorie on a time ouer the Popes heade, a meete holye ghost I assure you for such a consistorie and closet. Lette vs therefore leaue them, and this president of their Councils, and marke what seemeth good to Gods holye spirite, and to the Euangelistes and Apostles, and followe the same, considering as S. Augustine sayth in his seconde Epistle to S. Ierome, that no Scriptures are to be allowed, but the vndoubted Canonically. And in his first booke and seconde chapter against the Epistle of Parmenian, he indgeth it a rashe and presumptuous part to belceue anye, that prooueth not that hee sayth by scriptures. And in his thirde booke and. vi. chapter against the letters of Petilian, he holdeth any thing accursed, that is beside the lawe and the Gospell. In his first booke of christian doctrine, xxxviij. chap. he sayth: Our faith staggereth, if it be not rpholden by scriptures. In his. 166. Epistle, he sayth both Christ and his Church is knowne by the scriptures. In his seconde booke of Christian doctrine and. vi. chap. he sayth the holye ghost hath caused the darker thinges in the scriptures, to be opened by playner. And Chrysostome in his seconde exposition vppon Mathewe, the. xxiiij. and. xxix. Homelies sayth, The true Church can no waye else bee knowne, but onely by the Scriptures, because what soeuer thinges else in the Church, Heretikes haue aswell as Catholikes. But now to that they saye, diuersitie of translations in Scripture breedeth error, although the same be sufficiently ynough confuted before, by the erample of the seauentie Translators or Interpreters, by those five or sixe more that after Christs time corrected them, by Origen, by Hierome, by the Euangelistes and Apostles, writing in the Greeke tongue: yet we will alleage one or two places out of olde Doctors for confirmation of the same. For touching all obiections that the aduersaries can make, they are so fully answered by the olde Doctors, as partly you maye haue perceyued, that it were but vaine further to trauell therein. S. Augustine which is one of the fower Cardinall and principall Doctors, that our aduersaries allowe, who impugne this opinion, sayth thus against them. They that haue translated the Scriptures (sayth he) out of the Hebrew tongue into the Greeke, maye be numbred, but the Latine interpreters by no meanes. For in the beginning of the sayth, as soone as one had gotten a Greeke booke into his handes, and seemed to haue some knowledge in both the tongues, he tooke vppon him to interpret the same. Which thing did more further than binder vnderstanding, so that the readers be not negligent. For the perusing of diuers bookes hath often times opened the darker sentences. The place is

Math. 7.
Luc. 12.

Rom. 11.

Math. 5.

John. 10.

Psal. 110.
Psal. 2.

1. John. 4.

Apolog.

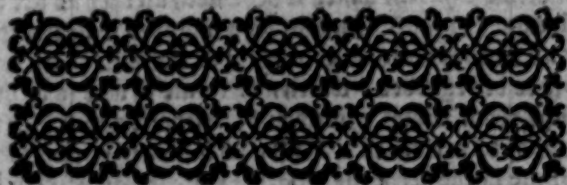
in his seconde booke of Christian doctrine, and. xii. chapter. And Nicholaus de Lyra one of our aduersaries owne Doctors, sayth in his Preface vpon the Genesis: that *Diuersitie of expositors stirreth vp attention.* But to bring more testimonies in a matter so clere as daye, is but impertinent, seeing that both Gods lawe and mans alloweth the truth, though testified but with two or thre witnesses. Thus hast thou gentle Reader my promise made in the beginning, confirmed by authoritie of Scriptures, euident reasons, and testimonies of auncient Doctors, though not in such abundant wise as might be, yet in as large a sort as the lawe and rule of a Preface will permit. Let vs therefore addresse and prepare our selues diligently, not onely to reade the Scriptures, but also to vnderstande them, and not to vnderstande them onely, and there to stay, (as I am afrayde too manye in these dayes make that their onely ende of reading) but also to frame our selues to expresse our vnderstanding in our liues and conuersation, least hauing the Gospell still in our mouthes, and shewing nothing thereof in our maners, and yet professing a more sounde and exact knowledge than others, we encrease at length but our owne punishment and damnation, knowing that every one that sayth *Lord, Lord,* shall not enter into the kingdome of beauen, but he that doth the will of the father which is in beauen. And howe the seruant that knoweth his masters will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. Let vs remember that the temple of Salomon, and the writings of the lawes and Prophetes among the Iewes, little profited them, because they abused them, and woulde not leade a life aunswereable to such blessings of God. God spared not that stocke of the Iewes of so many hundred yeares groweth, verily no more will he vs, that are but Impes graft and set in the same stocke, if we doe not better than we doe, and they did. But againe, if we liue a repentant life as we ought to doe, and a thankful vnto God for his innumerable benefites, and specially for the light of his worde nowe shining in our Church of Englande, so ordering our works that they may shine before men, and glorifie our father which is in beauen: then rage the worlde neuer so much by Gods permission against his little stocke, for their proude and triall, yet shall it neuer be able to take one of them out of his hand, but that he will ayde and assist vs with the presence of his spirite, and rule (as David sayth) *in the middle among his enemies, and bruse them with his yron rod, and breake all them in peeces like a potters vessell,* that any manner of way without repentance molest and afflict his dearely beloued spouse and Church. Let vs not therefore feare any threatnes or enterprises of this worlde, knowing that we shall overcome in him that hath alreadye overcome the Deuill and the worlde. Greater (sayth S. Iohn) *(is the spirite) that is in you, than hee that is in the world.* For there was neuer yet tyrant that rose against Gods Church, but some shamefull & horrible ende folowed him most commonly in this worlde. The ecclesiasticall story is full of examples, & of late God hath shewed some notable in this case, both here in our countrie, and abroad, who list to marke and consider them. True it is that christians haue bene made away and murdered, vpon verie light and tryling occasions, and are also at this daye, where tyrants doe reigne. For in Tertullians dayes, which liued about two hundred and nine yeares after Christ: If the riuer Tybris at Rome had flowed vp to the walles, if Nilus the riuer in Aegypt had not watered their fieldes, if there had bene no raine, if there had bene any earthquake, dearth or plague, by and by the people would crye to haue the Christians throwne to the Lions. And all this was to ridde the countrie of them, and to deface their beliefe and doctrine. But what folowed hereof? Verily nothing lesse than they weened. For Tertullian tolde them plainly: *Torment, racke, condemne, and make vs away, and your vniust dealing with vs, is but a tryall of our innocencie. Therefore God suffreth vs to suffer this at your bandes. The more exquisite your crueltie is towards vs, the more it alluyeth to take our partes.* And whereas they call be *Sectaries,* as then they did the Christians, lette vs reioyce in that we see our quarrell and theirs, our slaunders and theirs so like, and tell them as Tertullian telleth Scapula the Romanes President: *that this sect shall not fayle or decay, but the more it seemeth to be cut downe, the more let them be assured, it is builded vp.* And considering what they be that are our condemners. Let vs also saye: *Such and such consecrators of our condemnation we reioyce in.* For as Tertullian sayde, *whosoever knoweth him (meaning Nero) must needs vnderstande that of force it must be some singuler good thing that he woulde condemne:* so may we as truly say, of Boner, Storye, and such like, that haue condemned our faythfull brethren and sisterne, that whosoever knewe what they were, how they liued and howe they dyed, must needs know also that it

coule

to the Reader.

could be none other than god that they woulde condemne. And therefore lette vs saye to
them with Tertullian for a shoyt aunswere : when you condemne vs, God pardoneth vs. **W**her-
fore let vs not feare them that can kill the body, but then can doe no more ; ne yet that, but
when God permitteth : but rather let vs feare him, that can cast both body and soule
into the fire of hell, which is Iesus Christ our Saviour, knowing that he will
crowne all those that strive lawfully, and continue vnto the ende: to
him therefore with the father and the holy ghozt, ch: & per-
sons and one eternall maiestie of godheade,
all honoz, power, and glozy, be now
and ever, worlde without
ende. Amen.

1. Tim. 2.
Math. 24.
Marc. 13.



C.2.

To

To the Noble and honorable Consuls, and whole Senate of the famous Common weale of Zurich, his verye

good Lordes and Maysters, Raufe Gualthere Tigurine, wisheth grace and peace from God the father, through Iesus Christ our Lorde.



Is an olde custome, and confirmed by examples of holy fathers that the professors of godly lyes and learning, vse to dedicate the frutes of theyr studies, eyther to theyr friends, or to men of honour and authoritie, whereby to procure eyther their fauour and good will, or else to make them defenders of their labours and paynes. And where-as I haue thought god (most honourable Lordes and fathers) to dedicate my labours vpon the Titles of the Apostles chiefly vnto you: many and weightie causes haue moued me therevnto. For priuately your liberalitie toward me, required the same, and publickely the continuall care that you haue to profite your cuntry, and religion in generall, enforced me to shew mynt allegiance & godly hart, towards you, with some dutie of gratitude & thankfulness. Wherby that seruent desire that you beare vnto godlinesse might be set forth with the publike testimonie of our Church, whose example now many pcces, diuers excellent states of common weales, haue not bene ashamed to imitate. Howbeit, to tell you the playne truth, the chiefe cause of this my doing was, for that I percepued the matter of this booke, and the consideration therof appertayned vnto you principally: For in this booke is conteyned, a most absolute paterne and forme of Christs vniuersall Church, which it behoueth all such as are in authoritie & beare rule, well to knowe and vnderstande. For those men that say tempozall magistrates haue nothing to doe but with tempozall matters, and woulde haue them vterlye to abstaine from intermedling in ecclesiasticall affayres, are in no wyse to be regarded: which men seme to mee to be of opinion, that they woulde haue common weales exempt from Gods prouidence, without the which the verye Gentyles percepued they coulde not stande or be preserued. And who knoweth not that sentence of the Godly and princely Prophete: Except the Lorde keep the cite, the watchman waketh but in vayne. Which also exhorteth kings and Princes to suffer themselves to be instructed in the word of God, and to hisse and reuerence Iesus Christ the sonne of God. But to what ende shoulde kings be taught the word, if there be no vse of the same, in the administration of the common weale? And howe shall they hisse or reuerence Christ, if they neglect his Church, which he esteemeth dearer than the apple of his eye, yea, than his life? And how can they neglect that body, whereof if they be not members vnder Christ their head, they can not be saued? We must hearken rather vnto Esaias, who prophesying of Christs Church, amonge other thinges sayth. Kings and Queenes shall be thy Nurrices. In which wordes, he seemeth not so much to comfort the Church as to sette forth the office and dignitie of Kinges and Rulers, which chiefly appeareth in this, that God doth vouchsafe to commit vnto them the care of his Church, which he hath redeemed with the blood of his sonne. In dede we must confesse that God hath herein no neede of mans helpe, if he woulde vse his absolute & pccesse power. Neyther deny we that many times Churches are increased and defended rather by the power and vnspeakeable counsell of God, than by the industrie of man. But this cometh not so to passe because God disalloweth the care and dutie of Magistrates, but that it might appeare howe all prayse and glorie, is to be ascribed to him onely, because no man shoulde thinke religion depended more vppon the will of man, than vppon Gods prouidence. In the meane season such is the goodness of God, that he doth vouchsafe to take men to be his coadiutors & helpers, by their ministry to regenerate his elect people through the word, & defendeth the same vnder godly magistrates, against the rage of this world, in the midle of present daungers on euery side, that they may liue in peace & rest, as farre forth as is conuenient for their faith and saluation. And that this is the will of God, not only the scriptures testifie, but the whole consent of all nations doth likewise proue the same. Certes in that golden world of the Patriarkes, we read that one man was both king and priest. But when God afterward vnder the law woulde haue these offices seuered, yet ordeyned he a great continuation and amitie betweene the kinges and priestes, least eyther the kinges shoulde reigne without religion, or the Priestes by them not cared for, and regarded, might at the pleasure of wicked men bee misused. Wherevnto also maye be referred, howe God when he first gaue his lawe vnto the Jewes, chose Moses and Aaron, which were brothers germane, & committed to the one the charge of the Tabernacle, and Gods whole seruice, and to the other, the ordering of the common weale: thereby teaching vs that then both Churches and common weales are in most safetie, when brotherly concord and agreement is betweene both these administrations. This thing all those iudges and kinges well percepued, which are commended in the Scriptures for their well gouerning the common wealth. Such as we reade chiefly, Gedeon, Samuell, Dauid, Iosaphat, Ezechias, and Iosias were, with whome, if a man woulde compare the residue that the holy ghest, hath noted as naught, he shall find this to bee the cause as well of priuate, as publicke calamitie, that they haue thought the worde of God

and

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and care of religion, hath either nothing belonged vnto them, or else that they might dallye and playe with the same at their pleasure. And if we will reade the Hystories of the Gentyles, it shall appeare they were wonderfullie deceyued in the knowledge of the true G O D, and that therefore they polluted the seruice of God with horrible errorrs. And yet they firmlye helde this as a generall rule and principle, that common weales could not be happely gouerned without the true worshippe of God, and knowledge of his will, which was the cause that they greatly reuerenced the Philosophers, as professours of rare and singular wisdom, and in doubtfull affayres asked counsell at the Gods, and in erecting of Temples, Altars, and Images to them, spared no kinde of lauish, and cost. Merelye the people of Athens, whose Citie was compted as a publike vniuersitie and schoule of wisdom, so thought the care of religion belonged vnto them, that amonge the articles of publike or the ministred to their Citizens, this was the chiefe. *ομνῶ δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἱερῶν καὶ ὑπὲρ δόξων καὶ μόνος καὶ μετὰ πολλῶν.* That is to say, for the Temples and seruice of the Coddes, I will fight both alone and in company. These menne thought that whosoever were desirous eyther of publike peace or priuate thyett, ought to haue a speciall regarde of Gods honor. Let no man therefore accuse me of temeritie, if I saye, that such are destitute of common sense, and blinder than the prophane Gentyles, which crye out, the care of the Church and religion, belongeth not to temporall Magistrates and rulers. And I thinke I shall not do much amisse, if I say that such are to be auoided, as the publike and open enemies of mankind. For take away religion from man, and what shal remaine therein he shall differ from the brutish beasts: we see in them like motions of affections, as are in wild beasts. And if they were not brydled with the feeling of religion, they woulde burst out at euerye occasion, and the more they are armed with authoritie, and with the sword, the more harme they woulde doe. Therefore that we offende not throughe the bolde and preposterous wisdom of the flesh, it shall be verie profitable to haue a true paterne and forme of a Church for men, to follow in their Councels, that desire eyther to mainteyne the Church, or else to refoyme it being fallen in decay. This paterne the holy scriptures in euerye place set out vnto vs, and while the lawe endured, it did set forth vnto vs all the partes thereof vnder the figure of the Tabernacle, and in the time of the Prophetes, vnder the allegorie of a spouse, a flocke, a vineyarde, the Temple and Citie of Jerusalem. A most absolute and euident paterne or President of the Church, this booke comprehendeth, and setteth forth vnto vs, declaring that the same so grewe and increased, as the Prophetes once described it vnto vs, because none shall saye that we still had in our mouth such a Church, as neyther was ever vpon the earth, or euer shall bee, as wise men vled sometymes to saye of Plato his common weale. For although wee shall hereafter see the accomplishment and full perfection of the church in heauen: yet doth this booke set before vs such a president therof, that whosoever frame themselves thereafter, shall be members of that heauenly and perfecte church, and shall also vnderstand what way is best to take in preferring and refoyming their Churches, and shall be offended at no chaunces of aduersitie, nor yeelde to the dreames of such as obtrude vnto vs a straunge forme of Church, saying, our predecessours wanted many things, which holpe fathers afterwarde ordeyned, and were receyued and established by authoritie of generall Councels. For where this booke conteyneth in it an Hystorie of about. xxviij. yeares, setting out vnto vs the Actes done in the Church ouer all the worlde, besides the sermons of the Apostles, their Counsellors, their sayings and doynge, aswell publike as priuate, opened in a plaine and sufficient narration or discourse: who will not say but hee is impudent, that will affirme there are diuers other thinges necessarie vnto saluation, which wee knowe the true Christian Church in the Apostles tyme had not. Furthermore, whet arrogancie were it to contende with the Apostles, whome the sonne of God appoynted to bee the teachers of all the worlde, and to be witnesses of his doynge, as though wee were able of our selues to inuent or deuise a more absolute and perfecte thing than they? It shall also be very profitable, to marke the trade and order of this Primitiue Church, as out at a loupe, or creuse, and the chiefe poyntes thereof, which Luke sayth, spyring first of the word of God, after Christ was ascended into heauen, and from thence had sent his holy spirite, throughe whose inspiration, the Apostles beganne to preach the Gospell vnto the worlde, and to bring disciples or beleeuers vnto Christ. Wherevppon wee gather that they which either will be members of Christs Church their selues, or bring other to the communion and fellowship thereof, must beginne with the wholesome doctrine of the worde of God. For where by byrth we are the chyldren of wrath, wee must needes be regenerated from aboue, to become the chyldren of God. The seede of this regeneration is the eternall worde of God, which beeing preached by the ministerie of man, but quickened in the myndes of the hearers by the power of the spirit, reneweth the whole nature of man, so that his fleshe being mortified, he lyueth onely vnto G O D throughe Christ, who not long before being estranged from God, lyued vnto Anne. And the Apostles taught but one vniforme doctrine of the worde in all places, the which worde Christ himselfe distributed into his partes, when he first commaunded repentance to be preached in his name, and then next forgiveness of sinnes. And although the Apostles had not alwayes one kinde of hearers, but such as seemed greatly to differ, both in vocation, conuersation, & nature: yet did not they thinke it good, for this cause, to chaunge or omit any thing in the doctrine of the gospel, being wholly bussed, to bring many men vnto Christ, by duly & orderly dealing of his word. And vnto this doctrine of his word, they ioyned his vse of the sacraments, and those whome they perceyued to beleue, they toke into the societie of the Church by baptisme with all their family, and deliuered to them the sacrament of thanksgyting in such sort as

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Christ prescribed, the often receyuing whercof sealed to them the benefite of their redemption, and a thankfull commemoration of the Lordes death is therein celebrated, and the whole bodie of the Church is the moze surely knitt together with the bande of loue and charitie. And by these meanes, within the space of eight and twentie yeares, it is euident the whole worlde was brought vnto the obersaunce of Christ, and that by the ministerie of such as were neyther of noble stocke, dignitie in calling, nor of any estimation in learning. Therefore this was the verie working of God from aboue, wherein wee haue to reuerence his power, and to embrace his godnesse, which so graciously provided for the worlde, liuing oppressed vnder the tyrannie of the deuill. This booke setteth forth most diligently the exercises of the Primitive Church. Great sinners and notorious wicked men, such as not long before, had wickedly enterprised to shed the blood of the only begotten sonne of God, embraced the doctrine of the gospel. And the same being brought to the consideration of their sinnes, openly confessed them, and trusting in the onely mercie of God through Christ, obteyned fauor and forgiveness. From thenceforth forsaking their former unfulnesse, and taking a better way and trade of lyfe, they forsooke their companie, by whome before they were polluted. And to their Godly life, they toynd prayers, wherein they were feruently occupied, both in consideration of their owne infirmities, and by reason of daily perilles and incomburaunces, as many examples declare. And for that they would haue neyther doctrine nor the wholesome frequenting of the Sacramentes to cease, they had a speciall regarde that there might be Ministers, and Elders euerywhere appoynted, whome they placed in euery Citie, and with great diligence kept in doing their dute. And at length least the profession of Christ might seeme to consist onely in vaine contemplation, there sprang and grewe among them such feruent loue and liberallitie, that we may in these daies sener wonder at the same, than follow it. For eche Church and congregation faithfully made provision for their poore, and those Churches that were of best habilitie and ryches, relieved the want and pouertie of others further of, sending to them such collections of money as they had made and gathered for them. Well remembryng vndoubtedly our Sautour Christ, which being ready to leaue the earth, appointed the poore in his place, promysing to accept whatsoeuer benefite bestowed vpon them, as done vnto his owne selfe. And where being occupied in such Godly exercises, all men ought to haue made much of them, and loued them: they yet founde on euery syde most grienous enmyes. The Jewes, Scribes, and Pharisees, and Philosophers of the Gentyles gainsayde them, whereby they were enforced to haue perpetuall conflicts with those, that had the chiefe commendation for wisdom, and learning, as well among the Jewes as the Gentyles. Moreover, even out of the Church it selfe arose false brethren, who both through their lewde conuersation hindred the growth of the Church now springing, and offended very manie with their craftie and deceyvable enterpryses: such as Ananias was among the Jewes, and Simon Magus among the Samaritanes. And certayne wicked persons giuen vnto vniuersall sciences much troubled the Apostles, and the other godly. Bariesu, or Elymas the Sojurer in Cyprus, a man possessed with a prophesying spirite at Philippi, and certayne exorcistes, or coniuring Jewes, at Ephesus. And when the deuill perceyued, he coude nothing preuaile by any of these instrumentes, he began to speyre by the Magistrates and Rulers, by them to keepe vnder the towarde croppes of the true and healthfull fayth. And this thing the Jewes first began, to bring Christs religion the moze in suspicion, setting that Nation where it first sprang, receyued not the same. Wherevpon the Apostles were called before counselles at Hierusalem, were commaunded to silence, were beaten with rodde, and so being further threatned, were lette go againe. At length Stephen was stoned, the godlye driven out of the Citie, and persecution raunged in euery place, neyther were the Apostles themselves spared. For Herod behaded James, and thought for the Jewes pleasure to haue serued Peter likewise, if God had not after a myraculous sorte, deliuered him out of the present daunger hee was in. And the Jewes were not content themselves to reiecte Christ as none of their king and sautour, but also they would not haue him to reigne among the Gentyles. Wherefore they moued and procured byrges agaynst the Apostles in all places, as appeareth by the adoe that happened at Anrioche, Iconium, Lystre, Corinth, Thessalonica, and many other places. And finally they brought to passe, that the Apostles, and professors of the Christian fayth, were reported to bee guyltie, not onely in matters of religion, but also to haue holdelye transgressed and broken the Romayne lawes, and to haue troubled and disourbed the whole worlde. Wherevpon the matter went so farre, that the Romayne Emperours also, whose power at that tyme stretched ouer all the worlde, drew their sword agaynst the Christians. But among all these so great and many daungers, and in so craftie and most cruell attempts of the enmyes, there appeared a marueylous constancie of the Apostles and other beleeuers, whereby they both truly and plainly protested their fayth in Christ, and boldly defended and mainteyned the doctrine of truth, and neyther by flatterie or threats, coude be brought to forsake the standing, wherein God had placed them. Therefore our faythfull God did not faile them in so Godly a constancie, but declared by many and euident tokens, that he had a care of his Church. For being in bandes and prison he deliuered them out of the same, by the ministerie and seruice of Angelles: he comforteth them with ioyfull sightes and visions: he armeth them with the spirite of constancie: he giueth them a mouth and tongue which none of the enmyes was able to resist: he confirmeth the doctrine and faith of his people with myracles: he effectually draweth the mindes of men to beleue them: and to be short, he causeth the doctrine of the Gospel, dispite of the worlde and Prince thereof, through fire and sword, luckily to spreade ouer the whole face of the earth. In these

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these things is conteyned a perfitte and an absolute paterne of a Church, wherevnto all things written any where else in the scriptures touching the Church, maye bee referred. This fourme or frame of a Church, it is euident, that you also (most honourable Lordes) haue followed. For where GOD did vouchsafe about. xxxix. yeares past, to illuminate our Countrey Heluetia, with the light of his word, and to call it from the darknesse of superstition into the brightnesse of his Gospell, you thinking there was no longer lingring to be made, began aduisedly and seriously to consider howe Christs kingdome might be restozed in your common weale. Therefore you thought it good out of hande, to moue the Bishoppes, and specially him of Constantia, to whose charge your whole Countrey belonged, to laye to their handes with you in abolishing of abuses and superstition, and to take order for the refozming of the Church with your aydes and assistance. But while they forgetting their vocation and duties, made delays, you thought it shoulde be much to your shame and reproche, to see their negligence any longer hinder the publike saluation and glozie of God, and therefore (for that you woulde not want of your duties) you were the Capitaynes and beginners of so godly an enterpryse your selues: following the examples of Ezechias, Iosias, Constantine, and diuers others, which we reade in tymes passed did the like with great commendation, when the ministers and Bishops of the Church were founde slacke in their office. For appoynting a publike and generall assemblie of all the Ministers both in your Citie, and whole territorie, you willed them to deliberate and conferre among themselves out of the word of God, touching the chiefe pointes and articles of fayth and religion. And there were, that earnestlye withstode this your deuise, saying the determination of this matter belonged not to the iudgement of one common weale or Prince, but to the authoritie of an vniuersall, and generall counsell. Howbeit their authoritie was of no such force with you, that it coulde make you looke behinde you, after you had once set your hande vnto the plough. And therefore your godly begonne enterpryse did prosperouslye pzoceede. For in that disputation the truth had the victorie, and that in such sorte, that the greatest part of them that came to assault the same, perished therevnto of their owne accorde, and thought their greatest praise and glozie to consist herein, that God had giuen them grace to bee so happely ouercome, and to follow Christs Chariot in triumph. From that daye forwarde you neuer ceased to deuise and doe all such thinges as you perceyued did appertaine to the glozie of Christs kingdome. For you purged and yedde your Churches of the dyssolde and filthinesse of Images and Idolatrie, and cleered Christs doctrine from the pernicious inuentions of mans traditions, enacting by publike authoritie that none shoulde eyther reduce and bring againe, the superstitions abolished, or else teach the flocke of Christ any thing disagreeable to the doctrine of the Gospell. The vse and administration of the Sacraments, you caused to be brought to the fourme and order first instituted: you caused prayers aswell publike as priuate, to be duely ordered, and whatsoever other duties of true fayth, you caused to be exercised according to the prescription of Apostolike doctrine: yea, you caused your publike lawes, and discipline of maners to be refozmed after the rule of the gospell. And because no man shoulde think you did these thinges eyther for desyre of priuate lucre, or for that you desired in nouelties, you had a speciall regard that others might haue the whole fruite and awaile of the refozation, and your selues all the payne and labour in refozming. For you did not lyke sweepstakes rape and reue the Church goodes into your handes, nor put any man eyther of nobilitie or of the Church from their right. For those which were deceyued and caried with the common sway of ignoraunce, you laboured to winne by friendly and brotherly instruction, and did not incurteously cast them off. Whereby it came to passe, that they which were best witted amonge them, did afterwarde great good seruite to Christ and to his Church: and other whome eyther age, or dulnesse of wit hindered, you suffered patiently to enioy their goodes and reuenues, because they shoulde haue no occasion eyther to make complaint, or tumult. And whatsoever of those goodes fell to your administration, was appoynted partlye for the building and mainteyning of schooles, and partlye for the sustentation and relieuing of the poore. For you vsed in liberall wyse to mainteyne not onely the professors of sciences and tongues, but also certayne students of the same, to the number of fourescore, with continuall stipende and exhibition: insomuch that the most part of them which at this day preach Christ in your Citie, and Countrey, (which haue in them about an hundred and fortye parishes) are bounde and beholden to your liberalitie, for the rowme and place that they now are in. And such was your dexteritie in handling all these matters, wisdom in taking counsell about them, and modestie in executing them, that the thing which seemed impossible to be done, was easily brought to passe: insomuch that within short space of time, in a free nation, without any feare of publike tumult or sedition, with great approbation of the people, all these things that we haue spoken of were both taken in hand, and brought to an ende. For although they which thought Poperie was gainefull, and therefore coulde not well bryake the onerthowe thereof, attempted oftentimes many thinges: yet through the singular benefite of God, their enterpryses were alwayes in vaine, and the tempestes by them rayfed were chased away by the wholesome breath of our heauenly father. Where according to the precept of Christ, both the simplicitie of Doves, and wisdom of Serpentes, appeared in your deuyces. For as often as your aduersaries went about eyther by flatterie and fayze promises, or by fearefull menaces to withdraue you from your purpose, or at least woulde haue perswaded you to haue left all controuersie in religion to the iudgement of the Bishops and Clergie: you still answered them both wisely and plainly after this sort: that you coulde not, nor woulde not denie or reiect such thinges, as you had learned out of Gods worde, were true, and that you were ready to

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render a reason of your beliefe to any man that shoulde demaunde it of you: yea that you woulde willingly peeble to any man that coulde conuince you of error, by the holy Scripture, and coulde teach you a better waye of saluation than you helde. Diuers your answers of lyke kinde and tenour there are wherewith you stopped the mouthes of a great many, and wherein shall maye be read that saying of the Apostles: Whether it be right before God to hearken vnto you rather than God, iudge you. For we cannot choose but speake those things which we haue both seene and heard. Againe, We ought rather to obey God than men. Therefore the heauenly grace of the eternall God fauoured and prospered so godly enterprises: wherby it came to passe, that your common weale hath most happily escaped all kinde of tribulations, and at this day in the middle of the horrible and dangerous spyres and troubles of all Christendome, doth not only liue in peace hit selfe, but also is a most safe sanctuarie for forreyners and straungers resorting to hit from all places. Therefore great and weightie causes as me thinketh haue moued me (most honourable and my especiall god Lozdes) to dedicate this my labour and traueple vnto you, wherein according to the grace of God bestowed vpon mee, I haue gone about to open and make plaine that booke, which describeth the first countenance and looke of that Church that is called the primitive Church, wyth the proceedings, increase, and whole estate of the same, a president wherof, I see you haue followed, with no lesse industrie and diligence, than good and happy successe. Which president if they shall follow which shall succede you, in gouernment of the common weale, they shall both see howe you haue done nothing rashly, and on a head, and shall also perceiue themselves wonderfully pricked forward, to obserue and keepe with all their power, that fourme and order of a reformed Church and Religion, that they shall receiue of you. And surely it shall be verie profitable to meditate oftentimes, by what meanes and beginnings, our auncestours deuised such an order and fourme both of Church and common weale. For in so doing they shall neyther regarde slaunders, which maliciously depaue things done well and godly, neyther shall they be turned from the truth for anye stormes of persecution, or threates of the worlde that may arise. It is also profitable manye tymes to talke of these things befoze the people, which as they are ledde most commonly with things present: so doe they easily forget things passed and gone, and verie seldome thinke of things to come. Therefore they allow not the deuises of the Magistrates, but when they see them ioyned eyther with present profite, or cleere of perilles and daunger. For as sone as daunger once appeareth, they finde fault and lacke of wisdom and equitie in those, whose counsels they ought saythfullye to set forward, and obey. But if they did vnderstande, that their rulers had God for the authour and gyder of their doctres and deuises, and that they did whatsoeuer they did, according to their duetie, then surely they woulde learne moze religiously to iudge of their rulers, and moze easely to obey them, and woulde not so suddenly bee moued and turned at euery rumour of daunger arising. Surely this was the thing that I chiefly ment and intended, when I began openly to reade this booke to the flocke of Christ among you, and to publishe and set abroade that which I had openly spoken and declared. For I sawe that the state of this age waxing euery day worse and worse, was such, that it was most needfull continually to peruse the bookes of holy scripture, and to sette befoze the people, the examples of the primitive Church, conteinied in the same, that they shoulde not be deceyued with the gloses of such as vnder a false colour and pretence of antiquitie, burthen vs with newe errors, and accuse those things of noueltie, which graue and godly menne haue resorted vnto vs, out of the worde of God. Accept therefore, these my labours (mine honourable and good Lozdes) with such fauour, as you haue manye yeares bozne vnto the truth, and vnto mee, and manye other my fellowes and copartners, euen from our childehoode. Continue your good will vnto the students of diuinitie: holde on your accustomed humane and gentlenesse toward the pilgrimes and banished for Christs sake, abide in the mainteyning of your lawes, and correcting of the peoples maners, in enhauncing vertuous exercises, and in biddling wickednesse with iustice. In many places the horrible contempt of God reigneth. Diuers doe wickedly reiect the wholesome benefite of Gods worde, and the knowledge of Christ. Charitie in most men waxeth chill, and sayth sayleth euery day by little and little. Iniquitie aboundeth, and newe croppes of naughtynesse dayly encrease. God therefore being angry, threatheth vs with punishment, and feareth the worlde with wonders, monsters, and horrible vyces of kingdomes. And yet will he neuer sayle them which abyde and continue in promoting his glorie, defende the Church of his Christ, and according to the measure of their vocation, perseuere in doing their duetie. He shall blesse your labours, and gouerne your counsels by his spirite: he shall blesse all your people, so that they shall of their owne accord, obey your wholesome lawes, and moste happily enioye the gladsonie benefite of euangelicall peace. He shall blesse your whole Church, so that it shall go forward euery day moze and moze in the doctrine of godlinesse. To him who is the onely Lozde of Lozdes, the immortall and euerylasting God, be blessing, honour, power, and glorie for euer. Amen. Given at Zurich, in your famous and chiefe Citie of Heluetia: the first daye of August, in the yeare of oure Lozde.

Ioannes Parkhurstus Anglus Episcopus
Nordouicensis.

*Multa relucenti debent hæc tempora Luca,
Et debet Lucas multa Rodolpho tibi.
Lux Lucae luxit totum diffusa per orbem,
Lux Lucae lucet nunc magè luce tua.
Ergo tibi Lucae tantum qui luminis adfers,
Christus cum Luca, lucida regna dabit.*

Eiusdem aliud ad Lectorem.

*Quæ περὶ τῶν fuerint Apostolorum
Qui ritus veteres apudq; Patres,
Et quot: discere Lector, est ne cordi?
Huc adsis, auido legantur ore
Hæc quæ scripta vides pererudita,
Sacris eruta scripta quæq; libris,
Aut è Patribus eruta Orthodoxis.
Quæ multo peperit tibi labore
Gualtherus, pietate clarus atq;
Doctrina, patriæ decus, suæq;
Præfulgens, celebres habendus inter
Scriptores: potes id negare Liur?
Laudes quid memorare pergo, plures?
Vino vendibili haud opus virente
Est suspensa hedera: Liber loquatur.*

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FINIS



The first chapter reports

The first chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The first Homelie.

IN the former treatise (deare THEOPHILVS) we haue spoken of all that IESVS began to doe, and teach, vntill the daye, in which hee was taken vp, after that hee through the holye Ghost, had giuen commaundements vnto the Apostles whom he had chosen.



Heat is the prayse of Hystorie, though but prophane, for that the wissest men haue called hir the witnessse of tymes, the light of truth, the life of remembrance, the Maystresse of lyfe, and the Messenger of Antiquitie: yet certaine it is, that these titles may be applyed to no Hystorie more deservedly, and truly, than to the Hystorie contained in the Bookes of the olde and newe Testament, which the holy Ghost hath deliuered vnto the Church. For this Hystorie bringeth vs, an exact, & an infallible account of the tymes, from the first beginning of

the worlde, vnto the birth of Iesus Christ, which account, with other wryters is founde vncertaine, and deceyfull. This Hystorie, is not onely the light, but also the touchstone, whereby the wrytinges, and credite of all other Hystoriographers, ought to be tryed. This Hystorie conserueth vs the memorie of things done in very deepe, and which in very deepe appertayne to our saluation. And those things which lye hidden, in the secreete closets, of reuerend antiquitie, she most truly reporteth vnto vs, and maystresse of life, she onely, and none other ought to be called. For she layeth before vs the examplers, not onely of vices and vertues, and the changeable occurrences of the worlde, by the which we may learne how to frame this present life, but taking hir sight yet higher, she giueth preceptes of eternall saluation of the soule, she reuealeth the holy will of God, she layeth before vs presidents of Gods promises, and threatens, she describeth the iudgement of God against the disobedient, and declareth his protection and tuition, wherewith he defendeth those that worship him. And to conclude, she setteth before vs, to behold as in a glasse, all the nature and propertie of God, that euery man may see, what an one he boundeth to be to vs, & what maner of ones he requirerh vs againe, to be towardes him. Which things vnlesse we imprint in our mindes, we traueple in all other hystories but in haine, which may delight vs with vaine ioye, but are not able to enflame our mindes, with the loue of true vertue, and holy religion.

But amongst the volumes of holy Scripture, that make mention and report of things done: I thinke there is none extant, the reading and knowledge wherof, is eyther more profitable, or necessarie, than this, which is entituled, the Actes of the Apostles. For to say nothing of Luke, the Author

The commendation of the holy Hystorie, of Scripture.

The commendation and argument of the Actes of the Apostles.

1. The King-
dom of Christ,
is this world.

Psalme. 2.
& 27.

Zachar. 9.

Daniel. 2.

Esaie. 2.

Mich. 4.

Iohn. 12.

hereof, whose prayse is in the Gospell, which was present almost at all the things done (for the holy scripture inspired of God, needeth not the authoritie or prayse of man) such is the dignitie and maiestie of the things comprised in this Booke, that if the same be not able to allure & moue any man, to esteeme and loue the worke: in vayne shalt thou go about, by humane reason, to perswade him. Amongst the which things, we will intreate presently, of those, which containe the argument & summe of the whole narration or discourse.

And first of all, Luke describeth the beginning, proceeding, and successe, of that kingdome, which Christ hath in this worlde: whereof appeareth in the Prophets, many things foretold and tolde. For Dauid testifieth, that Christ is declared a King by God his father, whose inheritance (sayth he) are all the Nations of the earth, and who also shall rule the Ilandes. Zacharie prophesieth, that the boundes of this kingdome should stretch from sea to sea. In Daniel, it is called the Mountayne, that should fill the worlde, whereunto all the things are to be referred, written in other Prophetes, by these wordes: In the latter dayes it will be, that the hill where the house of the Lord is buylded, shall be the chiefe among hilles, and exalted aboue all little hilles.

I passe ouer diuers things for poloritie, which might be alleaged to this purpose. But if thou wouldest search these things, in the Hystorie of Iesu Christ, written by the Euangelistes, thou shouldest finde little or nothing, answerable to such honorable Oracles. For they describe Christ to be lowly, poore, and subiect to the iniuries, and reproches of euery man, and who after an infinite sort of calamities, abode most shamefull death on the crosse. Further, they shewe the borders of his kingdome, to haue bene very narrow and strait: for that the misteries of the same, were vnderstanded but of very few. But if thou wilt peruse this Booke, by & by whatsoeuer the Prophets, haue prophesied of the same, shall appeare to be most true: For he that seemed despised, and a man of no estimation, by his glorious ascension into heauen, hath triumphed ouer the Deuill and all his enemies, sitteth on the right hande of his father, from thence sendeth the holy Ghost, before promysed to his Apostles: wherewith they being inflamed, beginne to preache Christ, and not content within the borders of Iurie, are dispersed amonge the Gentiles, and amongst them, by the playne, and simple preaching of the Gospell, spredde the kingdome of Christ, both farre and neare, so that Christ stretcheth his kingdome from sea to sea: and the Ilandes of the sea beginne to acknowledge him to be their King, and by the ministerie of the Apostles, it cometh to passe, that all nations and people, flocke vnto this Mountayne, exalted aboue all Mountaynes, yea, reigning in heauen, which thing, Christ a few dayes before his death, prophesied should come to passe, in these wordes: When I shall be lyft vp from the earth, I will drawe all people vnto mee. And this is so euident an argument, of the kingdome of Christ, and of his power, that there can be none more euident. For no Prince were he neuer so mighty, coulde so quickly chaunge the fashion of the whole worlde, as the Apostles in few yeres did, being but abiects and contemned persons, and by the spirit of Christ working in them, grafted in the hartes of men, a newe, and before that time, vnknewen desire of fayth, and christian religion. Except therefore this Booke were extant, the truth of the kingdome of Christ, and the maiestie therof should appeare, eyther none at all, or at leastwise, might seeme obscure and vncertaine.

Beside this, there is one other thing very profitable and necessary to be knowne, that is to say, what maner of countinaunce, the Primatiue Church had, which was founded by the Apostles, according to the which, the Church in all ages ought to be reformed, when any errors or abuses shall happen. Touching which thing, as all men dispute therof in these daies, so shall a man finde very fewe, which wil take the straight way, opened by the Apostles, to amende the same. Wherby it commeth to passe, that we put newe errors in the place of olde, & driue away olde superstitions with new, as pieuis & noysome as the olde. Whereas if we would obserue the thinges written by Luke, we should haue a certaine & an infallible rule, aswell of doctrine, as ceremonies, which the Apostles left vnto the church. They taught one Jesus Christ, to be the onely Auctoz of our saluation, and, that men which by nature are sinners, and in daunger of damnation, are by no other meanes iustified & saued, than by faith in Jesus Christ. Yea, this booke aboundeth with most notable examples, wherewith the principall and chiefe article of our christian fayth (as I sayd eare whyle) is warranted and confirmed, against all the cauellations of Sophisters and Phariseis. For, what other did euer the Apostles require, of the vncleane Gentiles, and straungers, from the common weale of the people of God, but to leaue their olde superstition; and to beleue in Christ: Did they not preache saluation and forgiveness of sinnes to them, turning from their open ydolatrie: Did they not most stoutely stande against those blinde Bayardes, which would burthen the Gentiles with the workes of the lawe: as though Christ had not bene of power to saue, but those which prepared themselves to him by the deedes of the Lawe: Wherfore, if the faith in Jesus Christ, was once sufficient for the Gentiles, and they not to be charged with the workes and ceremonies of the lawe, published by God: I pray you what shall let, why the same faith and beleefe shal not suffice vs in these daies: Or shall we say that the traditions of men, are more profitable and necessary to the attaynement of Justification and saluation, than they which God once ordayned, to remayne till the time of correction: As touching ceremonies, & outward ryles, the Apostles thought it vnlawfull to charge the Churches with any thing, vpon their priuate authoritie. Baptisme, the order wherof, they receyued of Christ the Lorde, they haue most sincerely deliuered. The vse and maner of the Lordes Supper, as Christ did institute it, they thought good to retayne. In other matters of the Church, this was their chiefe care, to haue a Discipline, wherewith Christ woulde the naughty disposed to be kept vnder, and that the poore shoulde be honestly provided for, whose case and condicion, the Lorde did vouchsafe so earnestly to commend vnto vs. The thinges which besides these now a dayes, vnder the name of the Apostles, and Canons of the Apostles are obruded, we can not acknowledge for Apostolyke: neyther can any good man blame vs therefore, forasmuch as Luke maketh no mention of them, whose diligence and labour, the holy Ghost thought good to vse, in writing the Sermons and Actes of the Apostles. Surely, I will neuer thinke, the holpe Ghost eyther so vntoyse, as to take a negligent wyter of so high matters, or else so forgetfull, as to let passe any of those thinges, the knowledge and obseruation whereof, was so necessarie in hys Church. I would speake of euery thing more at large, but that they recourse in the treatise of the Hystorie, where they will be more commodiously handled. Let it suffice for this time to haue shewed the great

1. The forme
of the Church
primitiue, and
rule of refoz-
mation there-
after.

utilitie of this booke, in that it ministreth to vs, a true and an infallible rule of reforming the Church, which except they obserue, which will be called and counted reformers, they may well reioyce in their reformations in y^e iudgement of the fleshe, but they shall neuer giue vs Churches, that any man, but meanely trayned in the holy Scriptures, shall acknowledge in all pointes, for sincere, and true Apostolike Churches.

3. The condition, or state of the Church in this world.

Howbeit, this booke sheweth vs not only a forme & paterne of the Church of Christ, but also it plainly teacheth vs, what the state and condicion of the Church is here in earth, which to know is both profitable and necessarie, as well for doctrine and information, as also for the comfort that thereby cometh vnto vs. For we shal see the Apostles in euery part of the world, finde it true that Christ foreshewed, touching their Crosse and afflictions. For God would not so worke by them, as that the things both superstitiously, and wickedly maintayned, in the worlde, till that daye, shoulde yelde of their owne accorde, to their preaching: but he would inbze them with labours and contentions. And in euery place there were founde, that woulde withstande theyr doctrine, and those not of the rascall and common sorte, but they, which for their learning and godlynesse, the worlde wondered at: such as were the Scribes and Priestes amongst the Jewes, and the Philosophers of the Gentyles. Neyther was the matter decyded wyth wordes. For so great was the authoritie of the enimies of the truth, that the Magistrates toke their partes: so that they were fayne to pleade their cause before them, and to contrarie their commaundements with hazarde of their lyfe. Thus being banished their native Countrie, they felt the smart of exyle, they were in perill by sea and lande, they laye bounde in Prisons, euerye man hated them, and rayled vpon them: and finallye, they ended their charge of preaching the Gospell, with their death and bloudshedding. These thinges if we consider, we shall perceyue, what we haue to hope for nowe a dayes, neyther shall we be offended, eyther wyth the authoritie or power of men, stryuing against the Gospell, wyth such rage and furie as they did. And on the other side, the loyalte and truth of Christ shall marueylously comforte vs, whom the Apostles founde so true in his promyses. For he promised the ayde of his holy Spirite, present counsell in aduersitie, and his safegard and defence against all men. All which he so perfourmed, that they hauing the vpper hande, despite of the world, and vnce therof, obtained their purpose, and were able with good successe, to perfourme their vocation. Let no man therefore feare the threates of tyrants in these daies, let no man be afrayde of Sathans enterpryses, let no man be abashed at the stormes & tempestes of this worlde. For Christ liueth still, and the truth of his promyses is infallible, which as they once were made to his Apostles, even so they are continued to all men, which beleue in Christ, according to their doctrine. And surely, if there were no other utilitie of this booke but this one, there is no man but seeth, how necessary the knowledge therof is, in these dayes: where we see euery where such horrible attemptes, against the Church of Christ, and such vnhappy disturbances and troubles in the same.

Iohn. 17.

4 Examples for men of all degrees and conditions.

Yet besides all these, the examples, whereof this Hystorie is full, bringeth vs no small fruit of learning and godlynesse. For in this stage, as it were of the Church, may we see the Apostles, and Apostolike persons, by whose example all the ministers of Christes Church, may learne, with what trust and

prudencie they ought to handle Christs cause, with what constancie and truth they may defende the same, with what puritie of maners they shoulde leade others, and with what courage and pacience, they should vanquish all aduersitie. Here are set forth Magistrates, both good and bad, by whose counsel and doings, they that be in office may take a president of their gouernment. Here want examples neyther of riche nor poore. Here haue men of whome they may learne, and here are remembred the notable deedes of certaine women, of whom all womanhood may take an example to lyue by. To be brieft, there is no degree or state, eyther of the laytie or spiritualtie, but this booke instructeth it with many & peculyer presidents. And although it be but little, which I haue spoken in commendation thereof, yet I suppose it appeareth therby, that God ment to enriche his Church with a singular iewel and treasure, whan it liked him by the mynisterie of Luke, to haue the storie of the Apostles, and primitive Church, to be written. It behoueth vs to acknowledge his goodnesse, and to followe the diligence of the holy Ghost, in searching for the thinges comprysed in this holy writing, which Luke beginneth with these wordes:

In the former treatise (deare THEOPHILVS) we haue spoken of all that IESVS began to doe, and teach. &c.

Before hee entred into the discourse of the Actes of the Apostles, he rehearseth the thinges that Christ did with his Apostles, a little before his Ascension. He bleseth a little short and plaine Preface, in the which as it were, by rehearsall of thinges done before, hee continueth and ioyneth this booke, with his first, entituled the Gospell of Iesu Christ written by Luke, and therewithal sheweth what he purposeth in this his other booke. For the sense of hys wordes seemeth to be this. In the first booke, I spake of all those thinges, which Iesus Christ the Sonne of God, did here on earth for our sakes: but now in this, I am purposed to discourse of the thinges, which he would haue done by the mynisterie of the Apostles, after hys departure in body out of the worlde. And he doth dedicate his booke to one Theophilus, whom most men do thinke to haue bene some speciall friend of Lukes, and singular in the fayth. In dedde the addition which he putteth to hys name in the Preface of his Gospell, calling him *ΚΑΤΙΣΟΥ* (that is) most noble, or excellent, is vsed chiefly to great men in authoritie. And afterwarde wee shall heare how he attributeth the same to Festus and Felix, presidents of Iurie. He was therefore some godly man of authoritie, such as God bleseth alwayes to appoint in hys Church, to succour and ayde the same, beyng in strife and contention. And yet no man may hereof gather, that the same booke appertaineth not alwell to vs all. But rather let all men endeouour to shew themselves to be Theophili, that is to saye, louers of God, and thinke that Luke speaketh no lesse vnto them, than to this auncient Theophilus. And truly, as many as be laue in Christ, being reconciled by him vnto God, loue him, with all theyr harte and powers. But touchyng this opinion, it mattereth not much, since it is playne ynough, that all the doctrine both of the olde and newe Testament, appertayneth chiefly to all them that loue God, so that thereout they may haue both learnyng and comforte. It shall be profitable to examine these fewe wordes of the Euangelist somewhat more diligently.

And first is to be considered, how he professeth to write of all the thinges. For Luke may seeme to repugne with Iohn, which about the ende of the

Gospell

who Theophilus is.

Rom. 15.

How Luke is to be vnder-

stande, say-
ing he hath
wrytten of
all things.

Iohn. 20.

In Christs
ministerie
consisteth in
worke, and
doctrine.

Psalme. 2.
and. 110.

Gospell wrytten by him, saith: There be also many other things which I E S V S did, which if they shoulde be wrytten euery one, I suppose that all the worlde coulde not contayne the Bookes that should be wrytten. But these places may be easily reconciled. For Luke saith not, he hath wrytten euery thing particularly, but he testifieth, that he hath spoken of all things necessary to be knowen for the attaynement of our saluation, and which may instruct vs with sufficient knowledge of Iesus Christ. For albeit the Euaungelistes rehearse not all the doings and sayings of Christ, yet is Christ neuerthelesse to be beleued, neither was it needefull they should declare all things. For it is euident that Christ, which is the selfe truth, gainesayth not him selfe in anye place, but he obserueth one ende in all his sayings. It is manifest that all his doings tende to one marke and purpose. Wherefore, though the Apostles had let passe none of them all: yet should we haue knowen none other Christ, nor learned any other sayth than that we haue learned, by the wrytinges extant. This doth Iohn witnesse, when he saith: Many other signes truly dyd I E S V S in the presence of his Disciples, which are not wrytten in this Booke. These are wrytten that yee might beleue, that I E S V S is Christ, the Sonne of GOD, and that in beleueing, yee might haue lyfe thorough his name.

I O H N witnesseth that we attayne vnto life through beleefe in Christ. And forasmuch as this beleefe may fully be learned and perceyued by the thinges wrytten of Christ: I thinke no man, but he that is past shame, can denie, but that all thinges concerning the perfect doctrine of our saluation and Christian sayth, is comprehended in the wrytings of the Euaungelistes. Therefore Luke in these wordes reproveth the impudent arrogancye of the Sophisters of these dayes, who being tried and conuict to haue thrust many thinges into the Church, without authoritie of holy Scripture, would fayne slippe away with this slye shift, saying: that all the thinges necessarie for vs to beleue and obserue, are not contayned in the Scripture. Which if we graunt, then must we confesse, that eyther the Apostles & Prophetes, haue not taught vs the faith in Christ perfectly, or that this faith is not sufficient to saluation: neither of which is tollerable for Christian eares.

Furthermore, Luke comprehendeth all Christes office and ministerie here on earth, in two wordes, that is to say, in Worke, and Doctrine. We will not here speake of the dutie of a teacher, of whome, it is well sayde, that he should teach the people with good example. For the Euaungelist meaneth not in this place, to describe the properties of a teacher: but to propose and set forth such thinges, as are to be considered of Christ. And he giueth Worke the first place, whereby he meaneth not myracles onely, but whatsoever thinges else, hee did for our saluation, as King and Priest. For the Scripture teacheth vs in euery place, that hee is gyuen to vs a King, and a Priest, but chieflie Dauid. So as he was King, he gaue vs Lawes of lyfe euerlasting, and made his expedition, as it were, into this worlde, to fight against Sathan, the common enimie of mankind, ouercame him, and set vs at libertie, which were tyed fast in the chaines of our sinne. Furthermore, of his liberalitie, more than royall, he abundantly enriched all that beleue in him, with the treasures of the kingdome of Heauen. Moreover, by his Priesthood, he taught vs, he prayed for vs, and for al them which hanged him on the Crosse, and he offered his body & bloud, which he tooke of vs to be a sufficient sacrifice, and acceptable to God for our sinnes: Hereunto serued the myracles, by the

which

which he thought to bring men to the obedience of faith, and to teach the simple thereby how to know him. The other place he assigneth for Doctrine, wherein the reason of all the things done by Christ, is declared. In the meane season, we must not thinke Luke in vaine, to haue ioyned Woorkes, and Doctrine together, comprehending in these two wordes, all that concerneth Christ. For he teacheth, that in the consideration of Christ, these two must needs be ioyned together. For except wee consider hys doctrine with hys woorkes, they shall no more auayle vs, to the knowledge of saluation, than the thinges done by any other, liuing a thousand & five hundred yeares past and more. But if we consider his doctrine, we shall vnderstand that all these thinges, were wrought for our sakes, that saluation might happen to vs, through the benefite of Christ our Redeemer. Also, the consideration of hys woorkes, shall bring credite and authoritie to his doctrine, forasmuch as they beare, most manifest witnessse of hys diuine power, and Godhead, as Christ him selfe teacheth, saying: the woorkes which the Father hath giuen mee to finishe, the same woorkes that I doe, beare witnessse of mee, that the Father hath sent mee. And againe: If I doe not the woorkes of my Father, beleue me not, but if I doe them, and if you beleue not mee, beleue the woorkes, that yee may know and beleue that the Father is in mee, and I in him. With these wordes, are the counterfait Christians of this worlde impeached, who beleue all the woorkes of Christ, and furnished with an Hypocriticall faith, vse to praise all the thinges, that euer he did or suffered: but when it commeth to the poynt to beleue in one Christ, and the saluation obtayned by his onely merite: then as though they had forgotten theyr former sayth, they turne an other way, and seeke infinite meanes besides Christ, to attayne to saluation by. These men doe as they, which being allured with the testimonie of common reporte, of friendship, or familiarity, greatly extoll the Science of Physicke: but when they fall sicke, refuse to vse the same, thereby plainly declaring, that they distrust, both the Arte and knowledge of Physicke. Euen so, that which these men, confesse of Christ with theyr mouth, they denie in deede. The cause of this hurtfull wauering, is none other but this, for that they consider Christes bare woorkes, whereby they are moued, some what to marueyle at them, but that marueyle endureth not, forasmuch as it wanteth the proppe of doctrine, and is ignorant of the ende of them. Whereas if they would heare Christes teaching, they should perceiue, that these myracles were wrought and described, to the intent, that in him onely, wee should repose all hope of our saluation. For this is his saying: I am the waye, the light, and the truth. No man cometh to the Father, but through mee. Whosoever drinketh of this elementall water, drawne by his owne strength, shall thirst againe. But whosoever shall drinke of the water, that I shall giue him, shall neuer be more a thirst. Come vnto mee, all yee that labour, and are laden, and I shall refreshe you.

Iohn. 5.

Iohn. 10.

Iohn 4.

Iohn. 4.

Math. 11.

The ascentio
of Christ, is
the ende of the
Gospel.

Furthermore, it is to be considered that Luke maketh Christes ascention, the very ende and bounde of the story of the Gospel. For he saith that he hath spoken in the first Booke, of all the thinges, that Christ both did and sayde, vntill the same daye, that he was taken vp into Heauen, after he had giuen commaundments to his Apostles, whom he had chosen. Hereby we gather, that Christ by his glorious ascention into Heauen, hath perfourmed all the poyntes of our redemption and saluation. For wee haue shewed before, that in the Gospel is perfectly containned the thinges, which concerne our saluation.

tion.

Math. 28.
Math. 24.

The care
and studie of
Christe, for
his Church.

Iohn. 10.

Luke. 12.

The author-
rite of the
Apostles,
and of their
Doctrine.

tion. Bicause therefore the Ascention of Christ is placed last, it is certaine, that it was the last ende of all the thinges, necessarie to our saluation. This if we holde, it shall appeare as cleare as may be, that we henceforth neede no more bodily presence of Christ in the earth. For what should he doe in earth, which longe since hath faithfully and fully perfourmed the thinges, he had here to doe. We haue neede of the Spirite, the Grace, the Meryte, the Doctrine, the Counsell, and protection of Christ, which he neuer withholdeth from his, and after this sorte as he promised, He is with them vntill the ende of the worlde. He him selfe also forbiddeth vs to beleue them, which shall say, hee is any where corporally present. But bicause we haue a more commodious place, to speake of these thinges a little after, where the Hystorie of the Ascention is handled, let these fewe wordes suffice for this present.

This is now to be obserued, that Christ would not leaue the earth, before he had giuen commaundementes to his Apostles. For I vnderstande not this place of that one commaundement, where he badde they should not departe from Hierusalem, till they had receiued the promised holy Ghost, but Luke seemeth to speake vniuersally, of all the thinges, which Christ meant to admonish his Apostles of, and chiefly those which concerned the office of their Apostleship, of the which a little after followeth more to be saide. This is very comfortable, that Christ although absent in his body, ceaseth not yet to care and prouide for his Church. For here he fulfilleth the dutie of a good and faithfull Householder, which goyng into the countrie, committeth the charge of his familie, to his trusty friendes, and in the meane season, telleth eche of his houtholde, what they shall doe, while he is absent. Euen so Christ ascending into Heauen, commended the care of his Church to his Apostles, whom he testifieth in the Gospell, to take as his friendes. He instructeth them with commaundements, least they through rashnesse or vnfaithfulnesse should offende. The Parables in the. cxiij. and. cxv. of Mathew, make for the exposition of this place. Let no man therefore thinke that he is in such daunger of Tyrants, and deceyvers, that he is left destitute of the ayde of Christ, and so lieth open to theyr pleasure, & crueltie: for he that hath redeemed his sheepe with the pryce of his owne blood, and gaue such charge of them, to his Apostles goyng out of this worlde, he vndoubtedly beholdeth them still, and will not suffer any of them, to be taken out of his hande. In the meane while this also serueth for our purpose, that he that gaue commaundements, when he went forth, declareth thereby plainly, that he will one day come agayne. Let vs therefore prepare our selues against his commyng, beyng alwayes mindefull of the wordes of Christ, where he sayth: Let your loynes be girded aboute, and your lightes brennyng, and yee your selues like vnto men, that wayte for theyr Lorde, when he will retorne from the weddyng: that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open vnto him immediatly: happy are those seruants, whom the Lorde, when he cometh shall finde wakyng, &c.

But before we ende our Sermon, some thinges remaine to be discussed, which commend vnto vs the dignitie and authoritie of the Apostles doctrine. The first is, that he sayth they were chosen of Christ: He speaketh of a speciall choise and election, whereby they were taken not onely into the number of them that shoulde be saved, but were also appoynted for such an ende and vse, that they should be Preachers of the grace conferred by Christ, and as Paule sayth, Secwandes of the mysteries of God. Furthermore he saith,

they

they receyued commaundementes of Christ. For as Princes make for their Ambassadors letters of commission, which we call instructions, in the which not onely is contayned the remembrance of thinges, they haue to doe, but also the credite and authoritie they be put in: euen so Jesus Christ, would instruct his Ambassadors with commaundementes, that it might appeare what they had to doe. But bicause many consider Christ, but as he were man onely, and perceyue nothing in the Apostles, passing the condition of common persones: therefore Luke addeth, that these commaundementes, were giuen by the holy Ghost. If we would lay all these thinges together: it should appeare, that they were no humane, but diuine assaies, that were committed to the Apostles. It shall appeare also, that they doctrine is to be referred to Christ, as to the Auctor thereof. For they are Christs messengers, as Paule sayth: And they are commended with the testimonie of Christ, saying: He that receyueh whom so euer I sende, receyueh me. Againe, He that receyueh you, receyueh mee, and he that receyueh mee, receyueh him that sent mee. It is our partes therefore (Brethren) to iudge well of the office and doctrine of the Apostles, and thankfully to acknowledge the unspeakable benefite of God, giuen vs by theyr preaching, and to embrace it with true faith. For so shall it come to passe, that we being borne againe, of the immortall seede of his diuine Worde, shall leade a life worthy the children of God, and beyng deliuered, out of the horrible tempestes of this worlde, shall liue for euer in Heauen with the Sonne of God, Jesus Christ, our onely Lord and Sauour: to whom all prayse, honour, glory and power, are due for euer. Amen.

1. Cor. 11.

2. Cor. 5.

Iohn. 13.

Math. 10.

The seconde Homelie.

TO whom also, he shewed himselfe aliue after his passion, and that by many tokens, appearing vnto them fortie dayes, and speaking of the kingdome of God.



Wyle Luke, in Writyng the Actes of the Apostles, goeth aboute to ioyne that discourse with the story of the Gospell, as I tolde you yester day: he doth it not at all aduentures, but admonished and instructed by the holy Ghost, who meaneth thereby, to teache vs some excellent pointe of learnyng. For hereby it appeareth, that the story of the Apostles, should by no meanes be seuered from the story of the Gospell, and that whatsoeuer the Apostles did in setting forth the Gospell, and kingdome of Jesus Christ, is aswell to be referred to Christ as the Auctor of it, as the thinges he did in his owne person, while he was here on earth. For it is plaine that the Apostles did nothing of theyr owne head and power, but were moued and inspired thereto, as Christs chosen instruments, by his holy spirite. This thing the wordes of Christ teach vs, saying: It is not you that speake, but the spyrit of my Father that speaketh in you. And in an other place, he promyseth his holy spirite, to instruct them with all truth, and to giue them counsell what to doe. Wherevnto Paule had a respect saying vnto the Corinthians: Seeke you experience of Christ that speaketh in mee? The knowledg hereof is not in vaine, bicause it serueth both for our learning and consolation. For by these testimonies we are taught, that we

The Actes of the Apostles, are to be continued and ioynd to the Gospell.

Math. 10.

Iohn 14.

2. Cor. 13.

Ephc. 4.

The prooffe
of Christs
resurrection.

Iohn. 20.

Math. 28.

Marc. 16.

Luke. 24.

1. Cor. 15.

Luke. 24.

may safely beleue the doctrine and writings of the Apostles, not onely because they are the Ambassadors of Iesus Christ (for wee see that Ambassadors sometime doe their message falsely) but also for that they be instructed with his spirite, and as he inspyrith and directeth them, doe their office. It is no small consolation, that wee know Christ hath a care of his Church. For he that departing from vs in his bodie, left vs Apostles, by whose mynistry, his Church might be gathered together, hee distributing the giftes of his holy spirite in all Alges, giueth vnto his Church, some Apostles, some Prophetes, some Euangelistes, some Shepherdes, and Teachers, to the edifying of the Saintes, to the woorke and mynistration, euen to the edifying of the body of Christ, &c. But because Luke in yesterdaies Sermon, made mention of Christs Ascension into Heauen, he taketh occasion thereby, to intreate of the last thing that Christ did, a little before his Ascension, because it serueth well to the purpose of his discourse or story. And in this place he speaketh of two thinges, wherof Christ intreated with his Disciples. The one is a diligent prooffe of his Resurrection: the other an instruction, touchyng the Kingdome of God. Of both which, we will speake asmuch, as the Lord shall put in our mindes.

And touching the prooffe of his Resurrection, he vseth but fewe wordes, but they very pithie. For the same Iesus, saith hee, which before hee suffered, did and taught many things vpon the earth, the very same after he had suffered & was dead, shewed himself aliue againe to his Disciples, euen the very self same person & none other, neither in any other body, but euen in the selfe same, in the which he suffered. Neither shewed he himself to them as it were by chaunce, but proued by many arguments & infallible demonstrations, that he was truly risen againe, in the very same body wherein he liued, while he was here vpon the earth. And here Luke speaketh of those things, which he more largely in the Gospel, describeth that Christ did after his Resurrection. And amongst those things first are his apparitions, as when he appeared to Mary Magdalene in the Garden by the Sepulchre, like a gardener, where shee knewe him. And a little whyle after, meetyng other women also, comyng from the graue, hee saluterh them, and biddeth them shewe his brethren, and namely Peter, howe he was risen againe. Againe, he falleth in company with two Disciples goyng to Emaus, and after a longe communication, beyng set at the table, declareth and openeth himself to them. And after diuers like apparitions, at length he shewed him selfe, to more then fife hundred brethren at once, as Paule witnesseth. But because the eies are many times beguiled, & the deuils legierdmaines are too well knowne, wherby he many times with false apparitions, deceiueth the vnwary: the Lord therefore suffered himself not onely to be seene, but also to be felt and handled. For, fearyng least they might be deceyued, with some ghost or illusion of Sathan: Beholde (saith he) my handes and my feete, how it is I my selfe. Handle mee, and see: for a Ghost or spyrite, hath not flesh and bones, as you see mee haue. Therefore Christ rising from death againe, tooke not onely a semblaunte and shewe of his former bodye, but the very same substaunce, members, fleshe, and bloude. And for a more certaine prooffe thereof, not onely suffered him selfe to be handled, but for auoyding of all scruple and doubte, called for meate, and did eate in the sighte of his Disciples. Not to the ende wee shoulde thinke, that bodies glorified, had neede to be refreshed with meate and drinke, after the resurrection, (for where they are quite fræ from all corruption, they haue no

need.

neede at all of generation) but for that he would declare to all men, that he still did retaine all the partes of a naturall and perfect body: For the glorifying or clarifying of the body, taketh away neither the substance, nor partes of the body, but it taketh away the corruption and affections rising in the body, by reason of sinne, and according to the saying of Paule, that that was corruptible and mortall, it maketh to rise againe incorruptible, immortall, glorious, and a celestiaall body. The circumstance of time, maketh also for the prooue of Christes Resurrection. For he did not these thinges for one or two dayes, amongst his Disciples, but he was conuersant with them still forty dayes together, and euery day shewed such proofes of his Resurrection.

1. Cor. 15.

A bodie glorified, is not cūcty where.

These things were the more largely and diligently to be entreated of, (beloued in Christ) bicause there haue bene in all Ages, which haue gone about, either to call Christs resurrection into doubt, or else somewayes to blemish and extinguishe the truth of his body raised againe. Neither want we in these dayes, which affirme that Christes body, by reason of the glorifying thereof, is so altered and chaunged, that it now can not be conteyned in any one place, but is present in euery place: And, other grounde of theyr opinion haue they none, but bicause they would maintaine Christes bodily presence in the Supper. Neither perceyue they through theyr contention, that while they defende his bodily presence, they denie the veritie of his body, and so by themselves, ouerthrow that which they fight for, as for life & death. For if Christ be corporally present in the Supper, either his body must be conteyned in a place, or else it is there none otherwise, but as it is in euery place. And how can it be, that that which is conteyned in one certayne place, can be at once in many places together? Therfore Augustine vnderstode these things much better, who perceiued well that space of place could so little be separated from bodies, that if we toke space away, then were they no more to be called bodies. Take away (saith he) space or limitation of place from bodies, and the bodies shall be no where, and forasmuch as they shall be no where, there shall be nothing. Take away from bodies, qualities, and properties of bodies, and there shall be no where for them to be in, and therefore of necessity, they can haue no being at all. The same Augustine answereth them marueylous well, that in this case flie to Christs godhead, and omnipotencie, where he saith: Wee must beware that wee so defende not the godhead of the man, that wee take awaye the truth of his body. But of these thinges wee shall speake more othertwoheres. Now let vs come to declare what causes moued Christ, so many wayes to prooue the resurrection of this body.

In his Epistle to Dardanus.

In the same Epistle.

1. Christes Resurrection prooueth his kingdome.

The first me thinketh was the Maiestie and certaintye of the kingdome of Christ, which was necessary by his resurrection to be prooued. For where it was manifest that Iesus Christ was dead and buryed (which the Iewes also confesse) vnlesse it should appeare as manifest, that he was for a truth risen againe from death, all y testinonies of his kingdom should haue bene taken as friuolous and vaine. For who would beleue that he was appointed to be king ouer Mount Sion, that is to say, ouer the Church of God, whom he was sure to haue bene dead, and wist not whether he were risen againe from death yea or no: who would beleue that he sitteth at the right hand of the father, and bleth his enimies as his footestole, whom he knew not whether he were aliue or no: Except therfore the resurrection of Iesus Christ, were most certaine to vs, we could neither acknowledg him for our King, nor yet looke

1. Christes
resurrection
prooueth the
truth of the
Apostles
doctrine.

3. The Re-
surrection of
Christ, is the
stay of oure
saluation.

Iohn. 5.

Iohn. 6.

Iohn. 11.

Iohn. 12.

Iohn. 14.

Iohn. 17.

for any ayde or helpe in his kingdome. And it is no doubt but the Apostles ouercame all the threates of the worlde through this assaunce, and fulfilled theyr course and mynistry with such constancie, for that they acknowledged him, to be the conquerer of death, and were fully certified, that he which made them mynisters of his Gospell, reigned in Heauen.

The second cause of so diligent a prooue, I thinke was the doctrine and office of the Apostles, the certayntie whereof, was needefull to be strongly defended, against the iudgement of the world. Now what more effectuous and stronge prooue hereof could be founde, than the glorious, and euident resurrection of Christ, whome they preached, who was well knowne to all men: whereas if they had preached some obscure & vnkowne person to men, they might worthily haue bene suspected. But now who can doubt of theyr doctrine, which preach and teach him, who by his mighty resurrection, hath vanquished the power of death, & hauing conquered all his aduersaries, hath obtayned an euerlasting kingdome in Heauen: This thing considered shal easily perswade vs, to beleue, that Iesus Christ spake by his spirite, in the Apostles, & to embrace with all our hartes, the thinges that they haue taught vs.

Thirde, it behoued Christes resurrection to be well testified, bicause in it consisteth all the strength and force of our redemption, and saluation. For, we reade that he promisetht vs in his Gospell oftentimes, resurrect on, and life euerlasting. He that heareth my worde, and beleueth in him that sent mee, hath life euerlasting, and shall not come into iudgement, but hath passed from death vnto lyfe. This is the will of him that sent mee, that euery one which seeth the Sonne, and beleueth in him, hath lyfe euerlastyng, and I shall rayse him vp agayne in the last day. And in an other place he saith: I am the resurrection and the lyfe: he that beleueth in mee, though he were dead, yet shall hee lyue, and euery one that lyueth, and beleueth in mee, shall not dye for euer. What needeth many wordes? There is none other cause of our beliefe in Christ, but for that God promisetht vs, euery where in him, the life both of body and soule. But who would beleue, to finde life in him, which was not able to restore him selfe to lyfe agayne? Therefore, least we beyng offended at Christes death, should doubte in his promises, he was reuiued agayne, the thyrde day after his death, and being raysed agayne in his true body, declared that he had power and authoritie, to rayse agayne our bodies likewise. For he that beyng truly dead and buried, touchyng his manhoode, coulde rayse himselfe agayne, shall he not now much more being aliue, and in his kingdome, be able to restore our bodies, from death to lyfe agayne? Hereunto belonge other promises of Christ, prouyng his resurrection. For he sayth: Where I am, there shall my mynister be. And in an other place: I will come agayne, and take you to my selfe, that where I am, there may you be also. Agayne: Father, those that thou hast gyuen to mee, I will that where I am they shall be with mee, that they may see my glory. And what else could these fayre promises declare vnto vs, but death, vnlesse Christ being risen agayne from death, liued nowe in Heauen: For thus we must of necessitie conclude: where Christ is, there must also his ministers be, which beleue in him: but Christ being dead and buried, remained in death. Ergo, his ministers also remayne in death. Now, Christes resurrection doth moste strongly confute, this so desperate an argument, and teacheth vs, to reason agaynst the threates of death, and terrour of Hell on this sorte. Where Christ is, there must also his mynisters be. But Christ

is risen from death, ascended into Heauen, and sitteth on the right hande of God the father. Ergo, The mynisters of Christ shall ryse from death, and shall with Christ theyr king raigne in Heauen for euer. Which thinges if the faithfull deeply consider in theyr mindes, they shall straight way, being boldened with this confidence, be able to triumph ouer death, and all theyr enimies, and say with Paule the Apostle: Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? If God be with vs, who can be agaynst vs? For they are fully perswaded, that neyther death, nor lyfe, can separte them from the loue of God, which is in Christ Iesus our Lorde. Besides this, death which is the reward and punishment of sinne, could by no other meanes be conquered, but by his resurrection. For as long as death helde them that were departed thys life, hir power & strength could neuer seeme subdued. And it behoued that death should be subdued, to set mankinde at libertie, and to deliuer him from sinne. For who could be certayne of remission of his sinnes, and reconciliation with God the father, as long as death raigned, which God in his wrath appointed for the punishment of sinne. It was therefore necessary that Iesus Christ should take away the yoke of sinne, and rise againe from death, that it might appeare howe death was subdued, & that sinne, the sting of death, was taken away, and saluation restored to mankinde againe. Therefore, it was not without a cause, that Christ thought it good, to haue the truth of his Resurrection with so euident argumentes to be confirmed. This is the chiefe cause that the auncient Prophetes moued with the spirite of Christ, propheticied the same aswell otherwheres, as in the Psalme. xvj. and in Esay. liij. is to be sene. Surely we learne that this was the chiefe hope, and greatest article of confession and beliefe, wherby the true Catholikes & worshippers of God, were alwaies knobone & tried, as may appeare by the example of Iob. For, when he was accused by his importunate friendes, of breach of faith and religion, he proued him selfe, this way onely to be faultlesse, for that he firmly belaeued the roote and foundation of religion. I know (saith he) that my redeemer lyueth, and that I shall ryse out of the earth in the last day, and shall be couered agayne with my skinne, and shall see God in my fleshe, and I my selfe shall beholde him not with other, but with the same eyes. This hope is layde vp for me in my bosome.

This place teacheth vs, what we should iudge of those mockers, which Hystories mention to haue bene in all Ages, and the Apostles foresheued should raigne in the later age. And now a dayes we may euery where here the prophane and wicked voices of such, as thinke themselves iolly companions, and pleasantly concepted, when they can with scurrilitie, scoffe and deride that, which we holde and belaeue of the last commynge of Christ, and of the resurrection of the bodye. But they can by no argument more euidently, proue themselves boyde of all religion, than by this. For in this Article, all the pointes of our beliefe and religion so agree, that who so denieth this, taketh away at once, all the beliefe and mysteries of mans saluation. We gather this sense out of Pauls wordes, which writing against such among the Corinthians, as denied the resurrection, amongst other thinges, saith: If Christ be preached how that he rose from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there be no rysing againe of the dead, then is Christ not rysen againe. If Christ be not rysen againe, then our preachyng is in vayne, and your fayth is also in vaine, and you remayne in your sinnes. Therefore

1. Cor. 15.
Rom. 8.

Iob. 19.

Agaynst the
scoffers at the
Resurrection.
2. Peter. 3.

1. Cor. 15.

The medita-
tion and vse
of the Re-
surrection.

1. Thes. 4.

what the
kingdome
of God is.

Mat. 18. 20.

Luke. 22.

The Mini-
sters haue
neede to be
well instruc-
ted before
they preach.

fore they that are fallen a sleepe in Christ, are perished. If in this lyfe onely wee beleue on Christ, then are wee of all men most miserable. &c. Therefore such wicked scoffers must be put away from vs, and haue no place permitted to them, in well ordered common weales. For what will they leaue vnassayde, which will go about so boldly, to ouerthrowe the foundation of our health, and as it were, with one blowe, cut of the heade of all faith and religion, as much as in them lieth?

Let vs learne to haue a right thought, and cogitation of the resurrection, that the same may serue both to gouerne our life, and to comfort vs. For this is a most effectuall preseruatiue, against the intilements of flesh & the world, oftentimes to call to remembrance, & set before our eyes, the shew and counterfaite of the last iudgement, set out to vs in the scripture. Againe, there can happen no greater comfort to man, than while he is in this body, to thinke of the ioyes of heauen, which he shall enioy in the resurrection of the dead. Notwithstanding he is now depressed with infinite griefes, cares, and sorowes. Verily Paule exhorteth the Christians, one to comforte an other, with such things as are written in Scripture touching this article.

It remaineth, that we speake of that other thing which Christ treated of to his disciples, at his last being amongst them. He spake, saith Luke, of the kingdome of God. It is the comon vsage in scripture, to call the affaires of our redemption and saluation, by the name of the kingdom of God, or of heauen, because the ende and scope thereof is, that as long as we liue here, we should be gouerned with the spirite of God, and being taken out of this life, should liue and raigne with God in Heauen. What thinges so euer therefore pertayne to the mysteries hereof, Christ hath diligently and in order expounded them. The beginning hereof springeth of vs. For before all things it behoueth vs, to know, in what kingdome wee are borne and lyue, before Christ hath illuminated vs. For except wee were borne sinners, and by reason of sinne, were in daunger of the Deuill and Hell, wee shoulde neede no restorpyng to the kingdome of God. But bycause our state is so miserable, it was needefull the Sonne of God should be giuen, which takyng our sinnes vpon him, should pource them, with the sacrifice of his body and bloud, vpon the Altar of the Crosse, and through the operation of his holy spirite, should regenerate vs to be the sonnes of God, by the immortall seede of his worde, which regeneration bringeth forth the mortification of the olde man, and conuersion of the whole life, and causeth them which before were ledde with the suggestions and corrupt affections of Sathan, to be brought to the obedience of faith, & to depend all together vpon God & his worde. And this is that kingdome of God, which he hath restored vnto vs through his sonne, & for whose increase wee pray as Christ hath commaunded vs, saying: Let thy kingdome come. And truly it was needefull that the mysteries of this kingdome, should diligently be declared to the Apostles, because that being deceyued with the common error of the Jewes, they imagined a worldly kingdome in Christ, wherein they hoped for honours, ryches, victories, and peace in the worlde, as they often strivings for the supremacie, abundantly declare.

Furthermore, wee ought earnestly to obserue the example of Christ, which would with such diligence and traueyle, teache and instruct his Apostles, appointed to the preachyng of the Gospell, and mynistry of his Church: And yet wee reade that they were conuersant with him whole thre yeres, were

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at his sermons, sawe all his myracles, and at length were sent abroade to preach. The Lord therefore would admonish vs, that the office of teachyng in the Church, is not bnauiusedly to be taken vpon vs, neither that it ought to be committed to any person, without a diligent tryall. For if things of pryce, the custodie whereof is difficult & daungerous, are not committed to euery man, neither doth any man that is wise, rashly take charge of them: how much more care and studie ought to be in this thing, where the charge of Christs Church, and the soules which the Sonne of God hath redeemed with his owne blood, is taken in hand? Is there any more precious thing to be found than these? How great and perillous a charge the oversight of them is, none can be ignorant of, which knoweth the infirmitie of our flesh, the entisements of y^e world, and the subtille sleightes of our common enemie. And it is the voyce of God, which once beyng spoken to Ezechiel, appertayneth to all the mynisters of the Church: I will require the bloude of those that perishe, at thy hande. This thing should they often remeber, which beyng studious of Diuinitie, meane at any time, to take this charge vpon them, that they may the more earnestly applie the studie of holy scripture, that they labor continually in searching the mysteries of the kingdome of God, least being deceyued through ignorance, they commit perhaps some error, in theyr office. Paule well remembryng the great daunger in this case, earnestly bygeth Tymothe, who he confesseth had euen of a childe learned the scriptures, busily to apply his reading. They also which in the Church haue authoritie, to chosse and ordeyne ministers, ought well to remember the same, least they disorder the Church, by admitting such as be vnmaete, which thing they must diligently take heede of. For it is no small error y^e herein is committed, because they are both Auctors of disorder in the Church, and also partakers of other mens faultes, as Paule plainly declareth. Would to God they would well consider this thing, which thinke the ministry of the Church, to be a sanctuary for pouertie, & enter into the same, for their priuate lucre and bellies sake, or without any mature aduise and deliberation, but drunken with blynde affections, thrust vnfit persons into the Church, and sometimes knowne naughtie packes, and despisers of all good discipline.

Ezech.3.33.

2.Timo.3.

1.Timo.4.

1.Timo.5.

Last of all, we learne by the example of Christ, what, and what maner communications, Christians ought to vse, that is to say, godly, and such as make for correction, and amendement of maners. For Christ talketh of the kingdome of God, with his Apostles. Let vs after his ensample common and reason oftentimes, of the kingdome of God, and of our saluation obteyned by Christ. Let vs diligently do away the corruption of our nature, and let vs endeavour that other may see and perceyue the same. Let vs haue our mind on Christs benefits, and often and willingly, set forth the same: let vs remember the benefit, wherby he hath bound vs all vnto him: let vs auoyd filthie communication, which corrupteth good manners, remembryng Paules saying: which numbryeth dishonest talke among the thinges, for the which the wrath of God, commeth vpon the children of disobedience. And let vs alway be mindefull of that saying of Christ, which affirmeth, we shall giue an accompt, in the day of iudgement, for euery ydle woorde. God graunt that wee abiding in the meditation of his kingdome, may learne to dispise thinges earthly, loue thinges that be heavenly, may die in the fleshe, and liue in the spryte, that hereafter wee may liue & raigne in Heauen, with Iesus Christ, to whom be blessing, honour, glory, and power, for euer. Amen.

The talke of Christians ought to be of the kingdome of God.

Colof.3.

Math.12.

The

The thirde Homelie.

AND gathered them together, and commaunded them that they should not depart from Hierusalem, but to wayte for the promise of the Father, wherof (sayth he) you haue heard of me. For Iohn truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the holy Ghost, after these few dayes.

The Argument and vse of this present place.



Because Christ chose his Apostles to thende that through theyr mynisterie, the doctrine of saluation should be solone amongst all nations: It was needefull that first they should be well instructed, in all the thinges that belonged to theyr office: wherein as Christ who was most desirous of our saluation intermitted nothing: so S. Luke setteth forth very diligently his last conuersation and doyngs with his Apostles, partly for that we might perceyue, the ende- uour and good will of Christ towards vs, and partely to declare what things are chiefly necessary, in the mynisters of his worde. And first of all, he pro- ueth the veritie of his Resurrection by many arguments, sixe weekes togy- ther. For whereas this is the ground of our saluation, whosoever wel vnder- standeth & knoweth not the same, he shall nothing preuayle in preaching the Gospel. Secondly, he expoundeth & openeth the mysteries of the kingdome of God, both bycause he would put out of theyr mynde, the opinion conceyued by common erroze of the earthly kingdome of Christ, and also bycause they should perceyue after what order and sorte they ought to handle the businesse of our beliefe and saluation, by preaching of the Gospel. And vnto these two adhereth a thirde point, that is to say, the promise of the holy Ghost, which he both now repeateth, & confirmeth the truth thereof by graue testimony, least by his sodaine departure from the earth, they should be all amazed, & admo- nisheth them also of the place when & where they should wayte for the same. This is a notable place, seruing much both to our instruction, & consolation.

The Gospel is begunne, to be preached at Hierusalem.

First, of the place he admonisheth them, commaunding them that they departe not from Hierusalem, but to wayte there for the promise of the fa- ther. Here the Citie of Hierusalem is appointed, to the singularest assayes and purposes, that euer happened in the world. And as the sonne of God, by the sacrifice of his body and bloud, in this Citie restored mankynde againe to his saluation: so in the same place, he would first haue his Apostles illumina- ted with his holy spyrite, and beginne the preaching of the Gospel. And here is that thing that would make vs to marueyle, if we consider the state and condition of the Citie. For this is that Citie, vpon which Christ pronounced such terrible and horrible thinges should fall. Against this Citie is spoken that, that is in the .xxiii. chapter of Mathewe. Hierusalem, Hierusalem, that kil- lest the Prophetes, and stonest them that are sent vnto thee: how often woulde I haue gathered thy chyl dren togyther, as the Henne gathereth hir chyckens vnder hir wynges, and thou wouldest not? And while he was in Galyley, beyng told how Herode layde wayte for him, he answered it coulde not be that a Prophet shoulde dye in any other place than at Hierusalem: not onely hereby declaring how sinfull the Citie was, but also many times denouncing the ouerthrow and destruction of the same. What shall we thinke then was the cause, that

Luke. 13.

Mat. 23. 24.

Luke. 19.

incoined

inuoed Christ to appoint so wicked a City, and so neare his destruction, to so holy an vse and bulinesse: Surely, none other than the infallible truth of God, whose promises cannot faile. It was once prophesied by the Prophetes, that the preaching of saluation shoulde spring from thence. In the latter dayes (sayth the Prophetes) the hill where the house of the Lorde is builded, shall be the chiefe among hilles, and exalted aboue all little hilles. And all Nations shall prease vnto it, and the multitude of people shall go, speaking thus one to another: yp, let vs go to the hill of the Lorde, and to the house of the God of Iacob, that he may shew vs his way, and that we may walke in his pathes. For the lawe shall come out of Syon, and the worde of the Lord from Hierusalem. Where it seemeth me good, not to pretermitt that whereof Suetonius, though an heathen Auctor, and enemye to the Christians, maketh mention in the life of Vespasian, saying: that there was an olde and common opinion in the East countrie, affirming that it was their destenie, which shoulde come from Iurie, to be conquerors of all the worlde. Which Oracle, he as an Ethnicke and Gentile, vnderstandeth of Vespasian, who by reason of his valiauntnesse and courage, shewed in the warres with the Jewes, made an entreye thereby for himselfe and his children, to clumbe vnto the Empire. We may more truly expounde the same of the Apostles, which being borne in Iurie, beganne to preach the Gospell in the Citie of Hierusalem, afterwarde filled all Iurie with their preaching, and at length dispersing themselves out of Iurie into all nations, subdued and brought all the worlde to the obedience of Christ. Nowe because Christ was not ignorant, that these things were decreed by God his father, therefore he bade them they shoulde not depart from Hierusalem.

Esay. 2.

Mich. 4.

See Cornelius Tacitus also, concerning the same opinion in his xxi. booke.

In the meane season, the consideration of these things, serueth muche both for our consolation and instruction. For hereby it appeareth that the promises of God, through the wickednesse and impietie of a fewe persons, cannot be frustrated and made baine. What (sayth Paule) though some beleueed not? Shall their vnbeliefe make the promise of God of none effect? God forefende. Naye let God be true, and all men lyers. This ought deeply to be layde vppon in our memorie, because we see it cometh often to passe, that while we consider the great want of beliefe, and wickednesse in man, we bitterly dispayre, as though the wickednesse of other shoulde be our losse and hinderance, which is a most grieuous temptation, and as it accuseth God, eyther of too much seueritie, or of vnrighteousnesse: so it hindreth and stoppeth vs most in the race of godlynesse. For who would holde on in godnesse, that were once perswaded in his minde, that he must perishe with the multitude of the vngodly? Here therefore it is necessarye that we be armed against such temptations. And stronger armour we cannot put on vs, than if we thinke that God knoweth his, be the multitude of the wicked neuer so great. And in the Prophet he confesseth he beareth to vs such affection as mothers vse to beare vnto the children borne of their owne bodies. And because he is the iust iudge of the earth, he will not destroy the godly with the vngodly, as Abraham the father of the faithfull well considered. Againe, because he is most wise and omnipotent, he can easily discern betweene the godly and vngodly, and can punish the one as they haue deserued, and with fauour defende the other. Herevnto is to be referred that fanne which Iohn the Baptist attributeth to Christ, wherewith he shall purge his floore, and se-

The wickednesse of the multitude, doth not frustrate Gods promises. Roma. 3.

2. Tim. 2.

Esay. 49.

Genes. 18.

Math. 3.

parate the chaffe from the corne. Hereof we haue in euery place examples. The Lorde knewe Loth in the middest of Sodome. He had a care of the Patriarches lyuing among the Chananites, although by Gods appoyntment they were ordayned to be destroyed. So in this place he knoweth his Apostles, and whosoever in Hierusalem are of the number of his elect. Neither doth the corruption and wickednesse of other, more in number and authoritie than they, preiudice or hinder them. After the same sorte, will he know vs in these dayes for his people, and will saue vs, so that we will depart from iniquitie, and in our lyfe expresse Christianitie.

It maketh for amendement of life, that we learne by the example of the Hierosolimytes, that no glory, authoritie, or prerogative of auncestrye can defende them against the iudgement of God, which continue in their wickednesse and vnthankfulnesse to God. For if euer there were any Cities notable, for power and glory, Hierusalem will in that poynt easily haue the superiortie. For to omit, that for the space of foure hundred thre score and seauentene yeares, there was among the people of God, the seate of the kyngdome and Priesthoode, that the kingdome stretched to the riuier Euphrates, that it brought forth most valiant kings, most holy Priests, and most diuine Prophetes: this one thing farre passeth all the glorye of the worlde, that God did bouchsafe to make it a president, and a patterne of the Church of Iesus Christ. For this cause is she adorned with such prayses in the Prophetes, and in the Psalmes. Therfore is Christ sayde to reygne in Syon. Therfore the Scriptures call hir the Citie of the great King. Besides this glory, the Apostles receyue in hir the holy ghost, and with good successe doe there begin the helthfull preaching of the Gospell. But coulde all this glory, deliuer hir from the hande of God, being angrey with hir, and from imminent destruction, when she had forgotten the benefits of God and his commaundementes, and followed not the vertues of hir forefathers, nor shewed hir selfe thankfull and obedient to God: Naye, but where they chose rather to follow the multitude of such fathers, as brake both Gods lawes and mans, & shed the bloud of the Prophetes: neyther the godlynesse of Dauid, which first builded there his pallace and temple, neyther the wisdom of Salomon, neyther the integritie of Iosaphat, neither the valiantnesse of Ezechias, neyther the zeale of Iolias, neither the sermons of the Prophetes, which rang in euery place of hir, neyther the myracles done by Christ and his Apostles in hir, neyther the Gospell begonne there to be preached, could let but that within fourtie yeares she was utterly destroyed, and being rased and layde euen with the grounde, hath scarce any marke or monument there left of so famous and noble a Citie. And that we saye happened to Hierusalem, both Capernaum that peculiar Citie of Christ, and Corozain and Bethsaida, notable by reason of the Apostles dwelling there, felt euen the same. Let them cease therefore to glorye in the vertues of their forefathers, and in the olde benefites of God, that cease not with vnthankfulnesse and disobedience, to prouoke the wrath of God. For vnlesse the hearers of the worde of God, be aunswereable to Gods benefites, they shall haue the same lot and porcion, with the unhappy Cities of Iurie.

Furthermore, to returne to the purpose of Christ, let vs see what the Apostles haue to do in the citie of Hierusalem. He biddeth them to wayte there for the promise of his father, by the which he meaneth the holy ghost, which he calleth

The dignity
or prerogative
of auncestry,
doth
nothing
waile the
wicked.

Psal. 2.
Psal. 48.
Math. 5.

Math. 11.

The holre
ghost is the
promise of
the father.

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the promise of the father, both for that he is truly promised and given of the father only, and also for that he had promised sundry times by the Prophetes, that in the coming of the Messias, he would plentifully poure forth his spirit vpon men, as Peter afterwards declareth out of Ioel. In the meane season he putteth them likewise in remembrance of his promises, which appeare euery where in the Gospell. If any man belecue in me (sayth he) as the Scripture sayth, riuers shall runne out of him, of the water of lyfe. Which wordes are to be vnderstanded of the holpe ghost, whom they that beleued in Christ should receyue, as the Euangelist there teacheth. And in another place he sayth: I will praye vnto my father, and he shall giue you another comforter, which shall abide with you for euer, euen the spirite of truth, whome the worlde cannot receyue. **Againe.** That comforter, which is the holy ghost, whom the father shall sende in my name, he shall teach you all things, and shall put you in remembrance of all things, which I haue sayde vnto you. **And againe.** When the comforter shall come, which I will sende you from my father, the spirite of truth, which proceedeth from the father, he shall beare witnesse of me. **And a little way after.** When he cometh, which is the spirite of truth, he shall bring you into all truth. **Bicause** therefore the father once promised by his Prophetes this spirite to the worshippers of his sonne Jesus Christ, and Christ hath obtayned vs the same, according as hee is our Mediator and intercessour, therefore it is well called the promise of the father.

Here is to be considered, that Jesus Christ suffreth not his Apostles, appointed long before to the office of preaching, and a great while by him faithfully instructed, to leape suddenly into the ministry, but requiring obedience of them, commaundeth them to waite for the spirite, promised of his father. We are taught by this example of Christ, that obedience to Christs commaundements, is chiefly required in the ministers of his word. For it is very meete, that they, which should bring other to the obedience of faith, which is the ende of the preaching of the Gospell, should first be obedient to the same themselves, and that they should doe nothing, without the appoyntment and commaundement of their Captayne. For so shall they not onely by their doctrine, but also by their owne example, perswade their hearers the better to obedience.

Moreover, this place admonisheth vs, that it is not ynough for Ministers of the word, to be furnished with knowledge and learning, except they haue also the gift of the holy ghost. For where no man cometh vnto Christ without hee be drawne by his father, they that haue the gouernance of the Church, shall in vayne teach and admonish men, vnlesse the holy ghost work with their studie and industry. Paule the Apostle well perceyued this matter, which calleth the Church the tillage of God, and confesseth that neyther he that planteth, neyther he that watreth is any thing, but ascribeth all the glory and successe of this matter to God onely, which alone can giue increase. Therefore the Ministers haue neede to be prepared by the holy ghost, least while they vnder take such a charge without his guiding, they procure displeasure and losse, not onely to themselves, but also to the whole Church. Neyerther shall he euer be meete for this rounne, which feeleth not the effectuous motions of the holy spirite within his hart. Hereof procede those preparations of the Prophetes, which we reade in Scripture, such as Esay, Hieremie, Ezechiel and other had before they preached, which seemeth to be the cause that Paule forbade that yong Studentes should not be chosen to the

Iohn.7.

Iohn.14.

Iohn.15.

Iohn.16.

Let the Ministers of the Gospell, obey the commaundement of God.

2. Cor. 10.
Roma. 1.

The Ministers of the Gospell, haue neede of the holy ghost.

1. Cor. 3.

ministry of the Church, because such for the most part cannot be verie sure of the operation of the holy ghost, and his present ayde. But that we speake of the ministers of the worde, is to be referred to all men, which are appointed to great charges and offices in the common weale. In which number Magistrates are not last to be placed, who being the expositors and interpreters of Gods iudgements, are in scripture called Gods. For what can they eyther well foresee or iudge, butlesse through the power of the holy ghost the affections be bridled that would carie them awry: Or what safetie can there be of publike weales which are not led with the spirite of God, but with fleshly wisdom. Whereas it is manifest that all good successe and felicitie dependeth of God: Salomon the wisest of all men, well marked this thing, who hauing choise giuen him of God, to aske those thinges that are in greatest price amongst men, despising all other, craued of God the spirite of wisdom, and of that true wisdom, which he describeth in his booke of Proverbes, whose beginning and roote is the feare of the Lorde. And woulde to God they woulde often remember this, that are Rulers in the Church and in the common weale. For the same woulde both kindle in them an ardent desire to prayer and godlynesse, and woulde make them more listen to the worde of God, whereupon coulde not but ensue, a true and perfite safetie of the people committed to their charge.

The doctrine
of the Apo-
stles proceed-
eth from the
holy ghost.

Luke. 10.

Galath. 1.

Wee must
teach nothing
but that the
holye ghost
prescribeth.

But before we depart from this place, two things remaine to be discussed, which may profitably be gathered of the promise of the holye ghost, made to the Apostles. For first it hereby appereth that the holy ghost was auctor of the Apostles doctrine, and therefore the same ought to be esteemed as proceeding from God, and not from man. For where they took upon them to preach, after they had receyued the holye ghost, which according to Christes promise taught them all truth, surely all their teaching must be referred to the same spirite. So wee must holde the dignitie and authoritie thereof as great as Christ maketh it, which sending forth his Disciples to preach, sayth: He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me. With the which argument Paule seemeth to be encouraged to say: If an Angell from heauen teache you anye other Gospell beside that which wee haue preached, let him be accursed. For how great soeuer the maiestie and the glory of Angels is, yet if the same be compared with the holy ghost by whom they were created, it is of no value. We haue therfore in this place what to aunswere to them, which hearing vs reiect and condemne the traditions of men, crye out, that the Apostles were men likewise, and thinke hereby to proue, that eyther the Apostles doctrine, must likewise be reiect, or else some place is left in the church for mans traditions. And in deede we are not ignorant that the Apostles were men. But because they spake not as men, nor in their teaching declared not the cogitations of men, but according as the holy ghost inspired their harts, shewed the mysteries of saluation, and of the kingdome of heauen: therfore their opinions by no meanes must be reckoned amongst the traditions of men.

Secondly, this place teacheth vs, that nothing ought to be taught and preached in the Church, but that that is deliuered by the holy ghost. For the Church is the house of God, in which the onely voyce of the godman of the house is to be hearde, and according to his prescript, all things ought to be ordered. And as the Bryde obeyeth the onely voyce of the Brydegrome,

and

and is not indged chaste, if the gile eare to the entyements or promises of shamelesse luters: so where the sonne of God hath espoused to himselfe the congregation of the faithfull, washed with his owne bloud, and hath made vs partakers of all his goodes, (which is the proper ende of mariage) we may not follow any other voyce than that whereby Christ the Bridegrome calleth vs vnto him. Further, for that Christ hath made vs the sheepe of his pasture, and hath redeemed vs with the losse of his owne bloude, it beho-
ueth vs to follow his voyce, and not to harken to the voyce of any straunger or hyeling. Neyther is their opinion to be receiued, which thinke it an error worthe of pardon to chaunge and alter somewhat in the doctrine of faith and saluation, so that in all things God onely might be worshipped. For to graunt that such haue a zeale of God, yet because they want the knowledge of the truth, they can no more please God than did the Jewes in tyme past, which being inflamed with the zeale of God, went about to establish their owne righteousness, and reiected that righteousness which God offreth vs in his sonne to be embraced by faith. And surely, if our zeale had bene sufficient in so weighty a matter, it had bene but vaine for the Apostles to haue looked for the sending of the holye ghost: why did they not therfore steppe forth to preache, and according to the godlye intent of their minde, teach the people what they thought belonged to the honoz of God, and glory of Christ? But Christes commaundement stopped them, who as he elsewhere appointed them to preache the things he taught them, so without the conduct of the holye ghost, he will they shall not take vpon them to preache, least that being beguiled with the counsell of mans wisdom, or seduced by corrupt affections of the flesh, they should swarue from the right way. And we reade that the olde Prophets were bounde by the same commaundement also, in whome the Apostle plainly testifieth that the spirite of Christ did speake. It is sayde to Hieremie: Behold I haue put my words in thy mouth. And God sayth to Ezechiel: Thou shalt heare woordes from my mouth, and shalt warne them from me. Therefore it is a wicked and monstrous temeritie of some men, which thinke they haue authoritie to coyne newe articles of the faith, and to thrust into the Church traditions inuented by mans brayne. And who I praye you woulde thinke him a faithfull friende of the Bridegromes which woulde not feare to intice and inuegle the Bryde to his lure and purpose? Let them therefore which teach in the Church, receyue all their doctrine at the mouth of God. He speaketh vnto vs in the Scriptures by his holye spirite. Let them therefore reade them, and they shall not erre.

But let vs retorne to Christes wordes, from whence we digressed. For he going about to render a cause of his commaundement, sayth: Of whom, you haue hearde of mee. For Iohn truly baptised with water, but you shall be baptised with the holye ghost, after not many dayes. These wordes haue a confirmation of promise, and consolation very necessary. For as there were diuers other things which might make the Apostles carefull in the consideration of their office: so there was no little cause to feare them, least some incommoditie might arise of the stay and tariaunce of the holye ghost. Therefore to take awaye all feare, he repeateth his promises, not in the same wordes, that are in the Euangelists, but with such as might bring to their remembrance Iohn the Baptistes saying touching this matter, which was
very

Iohn. 10.

Math. 10.
and 28.

1. Pet. 1.

Ieremie. 1.

Ezech. 3. 33.

The confir-
mation of
Christes
promise by
an argument
taken from
baptisme.

Iohn. 5.

berye needefull to be done, by reason of the great authoritie, that Iohn had amongst all men. Neyther ought it to seeme an absurde thing, that Iesus Christ which otherwheres receyueth no testimonye of man, woulde proue his promise by an argument taken from the authoritie of Iohn and his baptism. For this is the guise and maner of God to accommodate himselfe to our capacitie, & for that he would haue it appeare that Iohn spake by the holy ghost. This therfore seemeth to me to be the meaning of Christes wordes. If you remember with your selues, both the things which I haue sundry times promised you, and which you haue heard of Iohn my forerunner: you can no longer doubt of the sending of the holpe ghost. For when he baptised those that came to him in Iordane, he gathered the people not to himselfe, but to me, whom he truely confessed, to be more excellent than himselfe, and shewed them what I would giue them that beleued in me, euen the holy ghost, which is the spirite of adoption and earnest of saluation, & kindled in the beleuing people, a great desire of my kingdome. The water of baptism was a figure of this benefite, which afterward I should bestow vpon them. Which seeing ye haue receyued of Iohn, not without the inspiration of God, doubt not of the things which he hath promised you. For as Iohn hath discharged his dutie towarde you, and hath receyued you being sprinkled with water, into the felowship of my body, which is the Church: euen so wil I not fayle, truly to accomplishe that that belongeth to my charge, that is, to poure out my spirite most abundantly vpon you, the signe whercof, you haue already receyued. This sense (I say) seemeth of all other most agreeable to Christes purpose. Neyther ment Christ here to make a difference betwene his and Iohns outwarde baptism. For it is plaine that Iohns baptism and Christs was all one, forasmuch as Christ would be baptised of him. He rather maketh a difference betwene the signe, and the thing signified by the signe, and betwene his and Iohns office. He calleth the sending of the holy ghost, by the name of baptism, by an allusion, and bicause of the proportion that is perceyued to be betwene the outwarde signes, and the things signified. But we haue in these wordes two things most worthy to be considered.

Wee muste
make a difference
betwene
the ministers
and Christ.

First, that we ought to make a difference betwene the Ministers and Christ, whose Ministers they are, least we attribute to them that, that belongeth only to Christ. Iohn baptiseth with water, but Christ giueth the holy ghost. So the Minister is occupied about outward things while he preacheth the word, admonisheth, exhorteth, rebuketh, comforteth, prayeth for the congregation, & ministreth the sacraments. But they themselues be subiect to Christ, which according to his good will, quickneth the seede of the word in them by his holy spirit, worketh holy motions, cheareth them with comfort, and to conclud, reformeth and frameth them after the image of God, neyther mattereth it that all these thinges sometimes be attributed to the Ministers, and that Paule sayth, he had begotten the Corinthians in Christ, and that he traueyleth againe with the Galathians. For where God hauing no neede of vs doth vouchsafe to vse men as his coadutors, bicause he would haue the Ministry by him ordeyned, in the more authoritie, therefore bleth he to adorne it with such titles. For the which cause the same Paule sayth vnto the Corinthians, whom he perceyued too much addicted to the Ministers: What is Paule, what is Apollo, but Ministers by whom you haue beleued, and as the Lorde hath giuen to euery man? I haue planted, Apollo hath watered, but

it is God that giueth the increase. So neyther is he that planteth any thing, neyther he that watereth, but God which giueth the increase. If these thinges be obserued, both we shall worthily esteeme of the Ministerie, and giue all the glory of our saluation to Christ, for the which, his spirite euery where in the Scriptures so earnestly laboureth.

Secondarily, it is very worthye the consideration, that Christ taketh an argument from baptisme, to proue to his Apostles the truth of his promise. We are taught hereby that the Sacramentes doe so seale the promises and benefites of God, that we neede no whit to doubt of the same. For, God mocketh vs not with vaine shewes and promises, but whatsoever he promisseth in worde, and sealeth with sacraments, the same hee vseth to perfourme in deede. He promisseth vs by the preaching of the gospell forgiveness of sinnes, in the name of Iesu Christ, and the spirite of adoption, whereby we are made the children of God. He addeth as a seale to his promise, baptisme, where we being visibly washed, are receyued into the outward societie of the Church, or children of God. Therefore whosoever beleueth the promise of the Gospell, hee is so certayne of the forgiveness of his sinnes, of his adoption, and the possession of the heavenly inheritance, as he is certayne hee is washed with baptisme. By a lyke reason are we taught in the Gospell, that the flesh and bloude of Christ were gyuen and offred on the aultar of the crosse, for the lyfe of the worlde, that the sinnes of the worlde should be purged with the sacrifice of the immaculate lambe: Christ hath ioyned to this promise his supper, the remembraunce of hys death, in steade of a seale therof. Therefore whosoever beleueth the Gospell, is as certayne that Christes body and bloude was offred for his sinnes, and is as surely fedde with the merite of Christes bodye and bloude, vnto lyfe euerlasting, as hee is sure that he receyueth part of the breade and wyne at the Lordes table, according to Christes institution. And after this sort the sacraments are sayd to seale the righteousnesse of fayth, and to confirme and frede our fayth: not that the outward elements conceyue anye secreete vertue or power, by the wordes of consecration, for that efficacy and power must be attributed to all that holy businesse, by reason of Christes institution: which institution if thou take away, alter, or breake, thou prophaneest and ouerthrowest the sacrament vtterly. Therefore our myndes must be lift vp, that the thing we testifie by outward action, we may perfourme by fayth, which only apprehendeth Christ, and the benefites which he hath bestowed on vs, and gathereth vs into the number of those which shall raigne with him in heauen, to whom be blessing, honour, glory, and power for euer. Amen.

The sacraments seale
or confirme
the promises
of God.

The fourth Homelie.

WHEN they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying: Lorde, wilt thou at this time restore againe the kingdome to Israell? And hee sayde vnto them. It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the father hath put in his owne power. But yee shall receyue power after that the holy ghost is come vpon you. And you shall be witnesses vnto me, not onely in Hierusalem, but also in Iurie, and in Samarie, and euen vnto the worldes ende.

After

The Argu-
ment and vse
of this place.



After Luke With great diligence hath declared how our sauour Jesus Christ instructed his Apostles, who he would haue to be teachers of al the world, with all those things, the knowledge and vse wherof was necessary in the ministracion of their office: at length he cometh to the hystory of the glorious ascencion of Christ. But first he declareth the last talke that Christ had with his Disciples, wherein he comforteth them, and reasoneth with them more full-

lye, and at large, touching their office, which they hitherto seemed not very well to vnderstand. And the Disciples gaue the occasion to Christ to discourse hereof, while they vtter their grosse ignorance of Christes kingdome, with a very foolish and an absurde question. And bicause this place containeth much knowledge of things very necessary, no man ought to be weary of the studey or tyme, that is to be spent in the consideration of euery part therof. First, we will see the Disciples question, and then how Christ answered the same.

The cause of
the Apostles
errour.

2. Sam. 7.

Psalm. 89.

Ieremie. 23.

The question they propounde in fewe wordes, but such as argue great ignorance and rudenesse: Lorde (saye they) wilt thou at this time restore agayne the kingdome to Israel? They aske of an earthly and carnall kingdome, such as the common people amongst the Jewes, misvnderstanding the Prophetes sayings, thought would come forth. For the Lorde had sayde to Dauid: When thy dayes be fulfilled, thou shalt sleepe with thy fathers, and I will set vp thy seede after thee, which shall proceede out of thy body, and will stablish his kingdome. And thine house, and thy kingdome shall endure without ende after thee, and thy seate shall bee stablished for euer. Agayne: I haue sworne once by my holynesse that I will not fayle Dauid. His seede shall endure for euer, and his seate is lyke as the Sunne before me. He shall stande fast for euermore as the Moone, and as the faithfull witness in heauen. And againe: Beholde the time cometh (sayth the Lorde) that I will rayse vp the righteous braunch of Dauid, which king shall beare rule, and shall prosper with wisdom, and shall set vp equitie and righteousness againe in the earth. In this tyme shall Iuda be saued, and Israel shall dwell without feare. &c. I omit diuers other things to this purpose, which are euery where to be seene in the Prophetes and in the Psalmes. Nowe bicause the Disciples vnderstode these things according to the letter, they beleued that some earthly king shoulde ryle of Dauids posteritie, which should deliuer the people of Iurie from the tyranny of the Romanes, and restore to them their auncient libertie, and should set vp a kingdome flourishing in victorie, and triumph, such as was in Dauid and Salomons dayes. With which errour, the Jewes being blinded yet till this daye, despyse Jesus Christ the true sonne of Dauid, and looke vaine-lye for such a Messias, as we haue already declared vnto you. The same errour, bicause it had infected the mindes of the Disciples also, maketh them to propounde so pieuious a question, both out of time and place, giuing vs a notable lesson, what happeneth to such as being negligentlie occupied in scriptures, sticke in the very barke, and endeuour not earnestly to come to the pith and kernell.

The 3^{pos}

But let vs examine all the circumstances, that you maye see almost as

many

many errors in this question, as there be wordes. First, it is a notable error that they enquire of an earthly kingdome, where as Christ so often had admonished them of bearing the crosse. They hearde him saye: If anye man will follow me, let him denye himselfe, and take vp his crosse and follow me. Beholde I sende you forth as sheepe among Woolues. For they shall deliuer you vp to the counsayles, and shall scourge you in their synagoges. And you shall bee brought to the heade rulers and kings for my sake, in witnesse to them, and to the Gentyles. If they haue persecuted mee, they will also persecute you. They shall excommunicate you. Yea, the tyme shall come, that whosoever kylleth you, will thinke that he doth God seruice. **Againe:** Possesse yee your soules by patience. These I saye, and many such like they had hearde of Christ, yet forgetting them all, they dreamed of a worldlye kingdome, in which they hoped likewise they shoulde be Lordes. This thing proueth that they were both ambitious, and had a cowardly feare, where through they abhorred aduersitie, and present affliction, and desired to beare rule in the kingdome, before they lyke good souldiers had fought for the kingdome.

Further, they are in this to be reprehended, that enquiring after the kingdome of Christ, they make mention of Israel onely, nothing carefull for the health of other nations. But the olde Testament teacheth vs, that Christ the sauour shal not beare rule in Israel only, but also in all the world. For to him it is sayd. I haue set my king vpon my holye hill of Syon. Aske of me, and I shall giue thee the heathen for thine enheritance, & the vttermost partes of the earth for thy possession. Of him are also to be vnderstanded the things read in the Psalme. 72. His dominion shall bee from the one sea to the other, and from the flood vnto the worlds ende. They that dwell in the wildernesse shall kneele before him: his enemies shall lycke the dust. The kings of Tharsis and of the Isles shall giue presents: the kings of Araby and Saba shall bring gifts. All Kings shall fall downe before him: all nations shall doe him seruice. &c. Is not then the blindness of the Disciples notable, that enquire only but of the kingdome of Israel? For thus they derogate much from Christ, whose kingdome they driue into such straightes: and are very iniurious to other nations, whose saluation they ought to haue helde full deare.

To this if we adde the beginning of all this euill, and see what moued them to aske this question, we shall yet perceyue in them a very great fault, which Christ not long after findeth in them, that is to saye, curiositie, which no man without great offence to Godwarde can follow, neyther can any man satisfie it without great hazarde of his soule health. For they enquire not onely of the restoring of the kingdome, but they would also knowe the very tyme when the kingdome, which they doubted not but would come, should be restored. But how many other things were there, the ensearching whereof, had bene for them both more profitable and necessary? Why rather aske they no questions touching their office, and forasmuch as they thinke Christ should raigue on the earth lyke a Prince, why aske they not howe they shoulde behaue themselves in their charge, in the kingdome? Why doe they not cheerefully offer their industrie, care, studye, labour, and traueyle, to the setting forth of his kingdome? But this is the propertie of curiositie, that being very carefull about the things which belong not vnto vs, we easily neglect the things, wherin consisteth the chiefe weight of our duty.

We are thus diligent and prolixe, in finding out the error of the Apo-

stles error
is manifold.

Math. 16.

Math. 10.

Ioh. 15. 16.

Luk. 21.

Psalme. 2.

The falles of

holp men doe
proue our
corruption.

2. Corin. 3.
Philip. 2.

What carnall
folke seeke in
Christ.

Iacob. 4.

lies, not for that we delight with contempt, to depraue or defame them, whose labour and loyaltie afterwards shined very bright, in the setting forth of the kingdome of saluation, and to whome they owe immortall thanks, whosoever through their doctrine haue attayned to knowe Christ. But our meaning is, that men should learne to knowe the inclination of our corrupt nature and flesh, which is the first steppes to wholesome and true wisdom. And to that ende, the Scripture bleseth oftentimes to remember, the horrible falles of most holy men, that in them might appeare, howe easie it is for vs to fall into sinne and damnation, vnlesse we were holden by, by the faythfull and continuall care, and leading of Gods holy spirite. For what shall he hope more of himselfe which beholdeth the adultery and cruell murder of Dauid, a man after Gods owne minde, the multitude of Wines that Salomon the wisest of all kings had, being to much wedded to his Wines, the foule fall of Peter, and here the great error of all the Apostles gathered together: we must needs confesse, that we are not able of our selues, so much as to thinke one good thought, much lesse to doe well, but that all our sufficiency to doe well commeth of God, who worketh in vs both the will and the dede, according to his good will.

Furthermore, it appeareth by this example of the Apostles, with what minde they imbrace Christ and his doctrine, which are not led by his holpe spirite. For as these men little minding Christs heauenly kingdome, looke after an earthly kingdome, and in the same conceyue great hope of riches, power, glorie, and pleasures: so you shall see diuers likewyse affected in these dayes, when the merite of Christ, and the libertie gotten by him is preached, which looking onely vpon the goodes of the worlde, seeke vnder the pretext of Christ, honors, riches, outward peace, and such like: in the meane whyle little regarding the heauenly and euerlasting goodes, which Christ hath purchased by through the merite of his bloudshedding. To say nothing in the meane season of those filthy hogges of Epicures herde, who professing a Christian faith, doe yet nothing else but followe licentious sinfulness, casting aside all discipline and care of holy lyfe. Surely, even they which in these dayes goe for the best men, vnder the faire pretence of peace and concord, swarue many times from the simplicitie of faith, and both say and doe many things, for fauour and pleasure of men, which are most contrary to Christs commaundements. As though the friendship of this worlde, might stande with the true worship of Christ, and were not rather as Iames sayth, enmitie before God. This is the strong poyson of fayth and religion, whiche though it lye hidde manye times vnder a fayre shewe and colour, yet at the length it bursteth forth with the horrible losse of saluation, and offence of a great many, for of this roote spring these tymetakers, which are to soone ripe, whome the Lorde in Mathew likeneth to the stony ground. For as this ground receyueth in dede the seede, and causeth it soone to spring, but cannot bring it to rypenesse for lacke of moysture, to defende it against the parching heate of the sunne: so these men when they perceiue any hope of priuate comoditie by the Gospel, they will seeme marueylous fauourers of the same, they will haue Christ still in their mouth, and will crake that they are ready to fight with any man in the defence of Christs glorie. But if that hope deceyue them, and otherwise than they hoped, the crosse come, and banishment, pouertie and daunger on euery side appeare: then

as though they had espide a Snake, they leape backe, and laying away all their faith, and counterfeiting of faith, they spare not to say they were wickedly deceyued, and so degenerate into open enemies of the truth, being a little before stout defenders of the same. Least therfore the lyke might happen in vs, it behoueth vs to haue a right opinion of Christ and his doctrine. Let vs seeke in him heavenly goodes, which serue to eternall saluation. As long as we lyue here, let vs looke for the crosse and all kinde of afflictions. So shall it come to passe, that neyther we shall be deceyued of our hope in heauen, neyther be offended with the crosse and tribulations, which were so long before prepared our selues patiently to suffer.

Yet is there one other vtilitie of the Apostles errour. Their example teacheth vs, how difficult and laborious a thing it is, to pull out of mens mindes olde growne errours, wherein their selues haue lyued, and bene confirmed, by open example of others. For as was declared a little before, this errour of the Jewes, touching the earthly kingdome of their Messias, was an olde and common errour, in taking awaye of the which Jesus Christ traueyled more, than almost in any one thing else. For as often as the Apostles, deceyued by this errour, stroue for the supremacie, so often Christ admonisheth them of humilitie, and sheweth them that his kingdome is of a farre other fashion. See the .xxiiij. & .xxv. of Mathew, and Luke the .xxij. Neither fell it out to reason of this matter so few times as one, after his resurrection. For where this erroneous opinion, gaue occasion of offence, to the two Disciples going to Emaus, and they lamented that he was crucified and deade, whome they hoped shoulde haue bene the Redemer of Israel, Christ answered: O ye fooles and slowe of heart to beleue all the thinges that are written in the Prophets. Was it not needefull that Christ should suffer all these things, and so enter into his glorie? Furthermore, Luke sayde before, that Christ was conuersant fourtye dayes with his Disciples, and reasoned with them concerning the kingdome of God, and all the mysteries of his kingdome. Whence commeth it therfore, that an opinion so often and so strongly confuted, shoulde againe be reuiued? Surely, of none other cause, than of the disposition of our corrupt nature, which as it easily drinketh in error, so it always holdeth fast the same. And as the Ethnick Poet sayth: Drive Nature forth with a forke, yet will shee retorne againe? So the Israelites in times paste, bled to the Idolatrie of the Egyptians, fell to the worshipping of a calfe: notwithstanding, they had heard the terrible maiestie of God, renounceing and forbidding all vse of Images, not manie dayes before. Hereof came that long retayned superstition of hill aultars, in the booke of Kings, which the most godly kinges could not wholly abolish. And woulde God there were not examples in these dayes, that plainly proue that we say to be true. This consideration therfore serueth partly for vs to learne, how needefull it is in all refozrnations, cleane to rote and rippe by all things, whatsoeuer haue neuer so small occasion of error, and partly to cause vs to be the lesse offended with them, which continually fight against olde superstitions, knowing by the example of all ages, that there can in this matter be no diligence to much, nor no endeuour or labour to superfluous.

Nowe seemeth it time to declare what Christ answered. And his answer contayneth two poyntes. First, he reiecteth the Apostles demaunde,

To abolish the
olde errours
is a difficult
thing.

Luc. 24.

Christe re-
iecteth the

curious ques-
tion of his
Disciples.

The bounds
of Christian
wisdom.

1. Corin. 13.

Ecclesiast. 3.

Prou. 25.

All Astro-
logers and
Soothsayers
confuted.

as plentiful and unworthy the answering. Secondly, he openeth more clearly the manner of his kingdom, and in such sort, that he both comforteth the fearefull Apostles, and declareth after what sort in his kingdom they must minister their office. To the first point these wordes appertain: It belongeth not to you to know the times and seasons, the which the father hath reserved in his owne power. And in the beginning he sayeth nothing agaynst their false opinion of his kingdom, both for that other times he had spoken much of the same, and the coming of the holy ghost was at hande, which should teach them all truth. His wordes sounde as though he should saye thus much. I haue many times intreated of my kingdom, and hitherto, as I perceyue, I haue profited nothing. But admit that I should set by such a kingdom amongst the people of Israel, as you dreame, yet is your curiositie to be reprehended, that would knowe the very time, whereof you neuer hearde me saye any thing, and which it had becormed you in patience and hope to haue looked for, and not through vnprofitable and bolde temeritie, to haue preuented the time that God would reueale.

These wordes of Christ are diligently to be obserued. For with them he bridleth the bolde curiositie of mans wit, and appoynteth vs certaine boundes of Christian wisdom, whiche it is vnlawfull for vs to passe or go beyonde. For where the Disciples are reprehended, for that they would ouer curiously enquire for such things as God had reserved to his owne power onely: it appeareth sufficiently that hereby we are prescribed how farre our wisdom must extende, that we should continually be occupied in the searching and consideration of those things that God hath vouchsafed to reueale to vs in his Scriptures, and not to knowe those things which he hath reserved to himselfe alone. And what things he would haue hid from vs, and vnknowne, to leaue them to his power, wisdom, and iudgement, vnto that daye, in the which we shall not knowe in part, but shall face to face behold the mysteries of the kingdom of heauen. The same the wise man admonisheth, whose words would to God were written in the harts of many curious persons. Seeke not (sayth he) after the things that be aboue thee, and search not foolishly for the things farre aboue thy strength. Studye the things commaunded thee of God, and be not curious in many of his workes. For it is not needefull for thee to see with thine eyes the things that are secret. Make not to much search in superfluous things, and be not curious in many of his workes. For many things are shewed vnto thee already, which be aboue the capacitie of men. The meddling with such hath beguiled many a man, and tangled their wittes in vanitie. Wherevnto is to be referred the saying of Salomon: He that searcheth the maiestie shall be depriued of the glory.

Here therefore are confuted and condemned by this sentence of Christ, all the soothsaying Artes of Mathematicals, amongst which Iudiciall Astrologie beareth the bell. For Christ forbiddeth to enquire after the times and seasons, that is, what ought to be done at euery time, and what tyme is appoynted for euery thing. And herein is the chiefe vse of Astrologie, to foreshewe the successe of euery thing in his time. For when they knowe the houre of ones natiuitie, by & by they looke vpon the Horoscope or ascendent and figure of heauen, and so pronounce of the course of his whole life. And not content with the things belonging to the body, & goodes of fortune, they take vpon them to iudge of the soule also, as though the vertues and vi-

ces of man, and so by consequent eternall saluation, depended vpon the Planets. After like sort they write Prognostications of the things that shall happen euery yeare. In which (as if they were Oracles of Apollo) they reason of warres, of sicknesse, of dearth and scarcitie of things, and what tyres and naughtynesse shall raigne all the yeare following. And what doe these men else, but that that was reprehended in the Disciples, which yet went not about to learne such things by any Arte forbidden of God, but to know it at Christes mouth, whom God hath made vnto vs wisdom. Neither let them object the example of the Prophetes, whose propheties are extant of things that were to come, and who did sometimes appoynt the times of things afterwarde to followe, as is plaine that Hieremie and Daniel chiefly did. For these men vttered that thing for the instruction and comfort of man, which they receyued by Gods holy spirite. And God oftentimes vseth to foreshewe things to come by his Prophetes for mans health sake. But he hath in no place taught vs soothsaying Artes, whereby mans industrie can trye out thinges to come, but he hath condemned them, and shut out the students of them from his kingdome and people, as is to see in Deut. 18. and Mich. 5. Chapter.

There is also condemned in this place the curiositie of such as going farther, dare search for the latter day and ende of Christes conning, which Christ hath so appointed in his fathers power onely, that he sayth, it is vnknowne to the Angels, and to himselfe as he is man. Whatsoeuer things is meete for vs to know, they are abundantly declared in the scripture. We are admonished of the signes that go before that daye, not that we shoulde dispute of the verie time of his conning, but that being awaked from the sleepe of sinne, we should lift vp our heades, that the day of our redemption approaching, we mought be founde faithfull and diligent seruants.

In lyke maner me thinketh they are here reprehended, which trade to farre in the secretes of Gods eternall predestination and prouidence, while they search what number is of the elect, and call to account of mans reason the iudgements of God, whereby hee chooseth or refuseth men, which, as they farre passe mans reach and capacite: so can they not without great daunger be sought out. But the things in this matter which serue both for our comfort & instruction, God hath boughsated to reueale. For it is playne that the faithfull are elected from euerlasting in Christ Iesus only, through the mere fauor of God, without respect of our workes or merites. It is playne that this election is firme and stable, whereof God (as Paule sayth) cannot repent him. It is playne that faith is the infallible signe of this election, whereby we apprehende Iesus Christ, and in him righteousnesse and saluation. It is playne that the ende & marke of our election, is to lyue holy & blamelesse in this life, that when we be taken from this lyfe, we may lyue in heauen with Iesus Christ. These things God hath reuealed: and with these we ought to be content. In the things which can not be attayned to, nor perceyued by mans reason, it becommeth vs with Paule to marueyle with godly confession of our ignorance, and to crie out: O the depth of the riches, and of the wisdom of God: how vnsearchable be his iudgements, and his wayes vnfindeable, for who hath knowne the minde of the Lorde, or who hath bene a counsell with him, or who hath first giuen to him, and it shall be giuen to him againe. For of him, and by him, and in him. &c. Nowe let vs see the

Searchers
for the late-
ter daye.
Marc. 13.

Luc. 21.

Waders in
Predesti-
nation.

Rom. 11.

Ephes. 1.

Rom. 11.

The king-
dome of
Christ is
spirituall.

Iohn. 18.

Roma. 14.

2. Corin. 10.

The office
of the Apo-
stles is to
beare witness
of Christ.

Prouer. 6.

the other part of Christes answer, wherein he repeateth such thinges of his kingdome, as serue for this present purpose. He so handleth this matter (as I sayde before) that he both marueylously comforteth the Disciples, and admonisheth them of their dutie. For he sayth: You shall receyue power, when the holy ghost shall come vpon you, and you shall be witnesses to me, not only in Hierusalem, but in all Iurie and Samarie, and vnto the worldes ende.

First, he repeateth the promyse of the holy ghost, wherewith he comforteth the Disciples, and describeth the state of his kingdome. I woulde not (sayth he) haue you abashed, where you heare, you are appointed to the setting forth of my kingdome among the Gentyles. For this thing will not be compassed by mans strength, which I perceyue in you to be very small, and little regarded. Here needeth heauenlye and diuine strength from aboue, which I haue often promised you shal not want, and now againe I promise you the same. For the holy ghost shall come vpon you, which shall giue you courage and strength, that shall make you able to fulfill your office. We are here admonished that Christes kingdome (as hee confessed before Pylate) is not of this worlde or earthly, but spirituall, neyther consisteth in the power, honour, glory, triumphes, riches, and pleasures of this world: but in righteousnesse, peace, and ioy in the holye ghost. Wherevpon we gather further, that it is not set forth and defended with carnall weapons, and strength of Princes of this worlde, but with preaching of the worde, wherewith the spirite of God worketh effectuously in the harts of men. This teacheth the wordes of Paule, where he sayth: Though we walke in the fleshe, yet warre we not after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnall, but mighty in God, to cast downe strong holdes, wherewith we ouerthrowe counsailes, and euery high thing that exalteth it selfe, against the knowledge of God, & bring into captiuity, all imagination to the obedience of Christ. &c. Therfore they labour in vaine which go about by mans counsell, leagues, fight, fauour, and amitie of Princes, and such lyke meanes to set vp the kingdome of God. For Christes kingdome is in the mindes of men, which by no mans strength can be forced, but with the power and operation of the holye ghost. It becommeth both Kings and Princes to be the nurses and maintayners of the Church, as Esay sayth, but they shall neuer with outwarde power and strength set forth the kingdome of Christ. And the examples of all ages plainly teach vs, that whatsoeuer man went about, by his counsell and strength that way to bring it to passe, neuer happily succeeded.

Moreover, he expressely teacheth, what the Apostles haue to doe, in their office in this kingdome: You shall be my witnesses, sayth hee. This shall be your kingdome, your office, your dignitie, to beare witness of my doctrine, life, myracles, passion, death, buriall, resurrection from death, and ascension into heauen, and briefly of all the things, which I haue done and suffered for mans saluation. Neyther shall you expounde the hystorie of things by mee done onelye, but declare the ende and vse of them, that all nations maye acknowledge mee their onelye teacher, sauour, and redeemer. Christ thought good in this place to vse this worde witness, as also in Iohn the. xv. to admonish as well the Apostles, as the hearers of their dutie. For the Apostles and their successors, learne by the dutie of a witness, how to preache the Gospell of Iesus Christ. In a witness the loue of truth is chiefly required, and a lying witness God hateth. Againe, it is the part of a witness

to speake nothing but that he knoweth, which he hath so certainly seene and heard, that he doubteth nothing of the truth of them. Further, he must haue no corrupt affections, least of hatred, feare, or fauour, he put to, hyde or conceale any thing, but plainly confesse the thing he knoweth. Such witnesses, we reade that the Apostles were. For whatsoeuer they heard Christ teach, or sawe him doe, they truly preached it, neyther feared they the threatens of their enemies, as appeareth in all hystories. Neyther confirmed they their witness of Christ with words onely, but with their life, with death, and with their blood. It becommeth the Ministers of the worde to imitate their truth and constancy, who if for fauour of man, or feare of daunger they chaunge, or at least dissemble any thing in the quarrell of Christ, they pollute themselves with an horrible crime, and are in daunger of Christs sentence: Whosoever is ashamed of me in this naughty and adulterous world, him will I also be ashamed of, when I come with the holy angels in the glory of my father.

Againe, the hearers of the Apostles and Apostolicall doctrine are here admonished, what an heynous offence it is, not to beleue the holpe gospel, or to gaine say it. For it is not a simple preaching of Christ, or an hystoricall and bare narration, but a testimonie which the Apostles, as sworne witnesses, brought into the worlde by the very sonne of God, gaue not onely before the common people, but also before the Bishoppes, and Priestes, Kinges, and their Counsell. But he that in the lawe, giueth no credite to sworne witnesses, and openly denieth their testimony, bringeth himselfe in daunger of lyfe. What shall we saye then of those, which feare not to speake against the Apostles, being Christs witnesses: For they accuse not only the Apostles of lying, but also Christ himselfe, as much as in them lyeth, yea, they woulde cause God the father to be suspected, as though he would bring forth false witnesses, and obtaine his sonnes cause with suborned witnesses. This sawe that beloued Disciple of Christ, when he sayth: If we receyue the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. For this is the witness of God which he bare of his sonne. He that beleueth the sonne of God, hath the witness in himselfe. He that beleueth not God, maketh him a lyer, because he beleueth not the witness that God beareth of his sonne. &c. These things if we consider (brethren) we shall finde the chiefe cause of the euils of these daies. For where we take it for a ieast and pastime, to call in question and doubt the things written by the Apostles of Jesus Christ, yea many wickedly deny them, and persecute that testimony of Jesus Christ with fire and sword: it can not be but God must be angry with the worlde, and therfore it floweth with all kinde of euill. For Iohn the Baptist sayth: The father loueth the sonne, and hath giuen all things into his handes. Hee that beleueth the sonne, hath lyfe euerlasting. He that beleueth not the sonne, shall not see lyfe, but the wrath of God remayneth vpon him.

Last of all, Christ describeth the boundes of his kingdome, which they thought extended not beyond Iurie. For where he sayth, the Apostles should be his witnesses to the ende of the worlde, he plainly declareth that his kingdome stretcheth to all nations of the worlde. He manifestly and by name rehearseth certaine places, & that not without a cause. For where the Citie of Hierusalem, by reason of their great and horrible offence, committed agaynst the sonne of God, seemed unworthy the wholesome testimonye of the grace of the Gospel: it behoued to name hir also, that they might knowe how the

beginning

Marc. 8.

How wicked
a thing it is
not to beleue
the Gospel.

1. Iohn. 5.

Iohn. 3.

The boundes
of Christs
kingdome.

Actes. 10.

Psalme. 2.
and. 72.Christ is the
indifferent
sauioꝝ of all
Nations.
Galat. 3.
Coloss. 3.
Actes. 10.

beginning of preaching the Gospell should be there, where iniquitie most aboundeth. Againe, where the Jewes of an olde and ingenerate hatred, could not brooke the Samaritanes, therfore he maketh expresse mention of Samaria, least the Apostles, following the common opinion of the Jewes, should think they ought not to come at them. Now how needfull it was, to comprehend all other Nations, within the boundes of Christes kingdome, the example of Peter sufficiently proueth, who when the countrie of Samaria had receiued Christ, abstayned from companying with other Nations, vntill hee was instructed by a vision from heauen.

Nowbeit, Christ appointeth none other limits of his kingdome in this place, than the holye ghost long before had described by the Prophetes. For it is knowne what is contayned in the Psalmes, whereof I made mention before. Moreover, Zacharie speaking of Christ in the ninth Chapter. His kingdome shall reach from sea to sea, and from the riuer vnto the worldes ende. But that saying is most euident of all other, that Esay hath in the .xlii. Chapter: It is but a small thing that thou art my seruant to set vp the kinredes of Iacob, and to restore the destruction of Israel: for I haue made thee the light of the Gentyles, that thou mayst be my helth vnto the ende of the worlde. There are diuers other testimonies as is to be seene euerye where of them that reade the Prophetes. This is full of all comfort, that we see Iesus Christ is the common Sauioꝝ of all Nations, in whome as Paule and Peter sayth, there is neyther Iewe nor Gentyle, Barbarous, nor Scythian, bonde nor free, man nor woman, but in euery nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousnesse, is accepted of him. They also are here admonished of their office and dutie, whom Christ hath appointed to be Preachers of the Gospell, that they seeke not the saluation of one nation onely, but that as much as in them is, they solve the knowledge of Christ Iesu, and of saluation, as well by teaching, as writing (as we reade the Apostles did) thorowout the whole worlde. And it belongeth to all men, to embrace Christes goodnesse, which so liberally offreth vnto al, the saluation purchased by his bloud. Let vs receiue therfore with thankfull mindes this kingdome of saluation, that hereafter we maye reigne with Christ in heauen: to whom be blessing, honour, glory and power for euer. Amen.

The fift Homelie.

AND when he had spoken these things, whyle they behelde, he was taken vp on high, and a Clowde receyued him vp out of their sightes. And whyle they looked stedfastly vp towarde heauen as he went, beholde two men stode by them in white apparell, which also sayd: ye men of Galiley, why stand you gasing vp into heauen? This same Iesus which is taken vp from you into heauen, shall so come, euen as you haue seene him go into heauen.

The Argument
and vse
of this place.

Because LIKE moued by the holy ghost purposeth to intreat of the Actes of the Apostles, he beginneth very aptly to tell of those things, which our Lorde and Sauioꝝ Iesus Christ, now being readye to leaue the earth, did with the Apostles. For thereby it may euidently be gathered, that the Apostles did nothing of their priuate authoritie, or vnadvisedly, but that they were ex-

ecutors

ecutors of the things enioyned them by Christ, and therfore their doctrine was not to be taken for mans doctrine, but to be acknowledged and receyued as Christes. Nowe at length followeth Christes departure from earth into heauen, which Luke describeth with great diligence, and we ought to consider the same with as much earnestnesse: bicause in the description thereof, two notable articles of our Christian faith are comprehended, in the which, the chiefe hope of all Christians is grounded. That is to say, Christes ascention into heauen, and his returne, which shall be in the ende of the worlde, when he shall come in the clowdes, to iudge both the quicke and the deade. It shall behouue vs to consider euery thing in such order as Luke describeth it.

In this place he briefly dispatcheth the hystory of Christes ascention. For when hee had thus sayde (sayth he) he was taken vp on high, they looking on, and a clowde receyued him out of their sight. The cause of this breuitie maye seeme to be, both for that afterwarde he reporteth the sayinges of the Angells, which more expressely declare all the matter, and also for that himself about the ende of his Gospell, had more at large set forth the same. For there he sayth: Iesus ledde his Disciples forth into Bethany, and lyfing vp his handes on high, he blessed them. And it chaunced, that as hee blessed them, hee was taken from them, and caried into heauen. To the which, let vs ioyn the things that are writen in this wise: The Lord after he had talked with them was taken vp into heauen, & is set downe on the right hand of God. The summe of all is, that Iesus Christ, which hitherto liued on the earth, hath taken his body out of this worlde, and hath placed it on the right hande of God his father, according to the saying of Dauid: The Lorde sayde vnto my Lorde, sit thou on my right hande, vntill I make thyne enemies thy footestool. Although, such is the playnesse of this Hystorie, that it is put euen in the same wordes almost, in the articles of our Christian faith, or Apostles Cræde, wherein our forefathers would all things should be so plaine that it shoulde be perceyued and vnderstanded of berpe children: yet let vs discusse diligently euery circumstance thereof for their sakes, which in these dayes dare extenuate the same, while of his ascention they make but a disparition or banishing out of sight, and leaue vs nothing, but a vaine and bare fantasie or imagination therof, which men are gone so farre, that they appoint a locall, and substantiall presence of Christes body, in the breade of the Lorde. But being led and bewitched with the desire of contention, they marke not how they leaue him no place in the supper, whyle they denie that his body can be contayned in any place. Let vs therfore see what is properly to be vnderstanded by his ascention: next, who ascended, then after what maner, and into what place he ascended. And vnto these afterwarde we will adioyne, the cause why he ascended, and what commoditie and profite commeth to vs by his ascention.

They properly are sayde to ascende, which go from a lower place vnto an higher. Wherfore ascention is a moouing or carying (the Grekes call it *ἀνάβησις*) from one place to another, and that from a place beneath, vnto a place bpwarde. And that euen here, there is such a motion or moouing, none (but he that is most contentious) can denie. For this is it that Luke meaneth in the beginning of this booke, where he speaketh of Christes ascention, saying *ἀνέβη*, that is, he went bp or ascended, and in this place *ἐπὶ τὰ νεφελὰ*, that

The hystorie
of Christes
ascention.

Mar. 16.

Psal. 110.

What ascen-
tion is.

that is, he was taken vp. Both which wordes signifie a taking or carying away from a lower place vnto an higher. Neyther admit we their cauillation, where they expounde these wordes, the clowde that conueyed him out of their sight, thereby feyning their disparition or vanishing out of sight. For euen there it is sayde of the clowde *νεφέλας*, that is, it caried him or tooke vp on high: that in the meane season I saye nothing, how Christ must needes be in a place while he was in the clowde, vsing it as an instrument wherby to ascende. Beside that, the Apostles behelde him with their eyes, as he went, and sought him not looking this waye and that, as one conueying himselfe inuisibly away. For, *παραβύλων αὐτοῦ*, that is, as he went (marke the locution, whereby is evidently declared a moving from a place to a place) the Apostles behelde him looking vp into heauen. But what needed they to lift vp their eyes to heauen, if the Lorde were not caried into heauen: Why did they not rather looke hither and thither for him into the ayre, as after one that sodainly banished away? And the Angells afterwarde reprehend not the Apostles, for that they vaineely supposed he was gone vp into the element, but they rather confesse it to be true, and plainly entreate of his comming backe againe. Ascention therefore is a moving from a lower place to an higher, whereby Christ was caried vpp into heauen. For vnable we confesse this, the holy ghost must be accused, who without cause, in rehearfall of a plaine hystorie, which all men ought to knowe, woulde of purpose beguile vs with needelesse wordes.

Who ascended.

It followeth next to see who is ascended. But the storie is of Christ Iesu, which being rayled from the deade, proued the veritie of his bodye forty dayes together, by many argumentes. But when the Scriptures speake of Christ, the distinction of natures, whereof he consisteth as the Scripture teach vs, must be verie well obserued. For he which from euerlasting is very God, of the same maiestie and glory with the father, yea of one substance with him: he in the time appoynted (as Paule sayth) was made man of a woman, that is, tooke vpon him manhode, or the nature of man. Wherefore in one and the selfe person of Christ, are ioyned two natures, to saye, the diuine and the humane. And yet by reason of the vnitie of person, the natures be neyther confounded nor chaunged, but the proprietie of eche nature remayneth whole and distinct. And by vnitie of person it cometh to passe, that that which is proper to one nature onely, is attributed to whole Christ, and Christ is sayde to haue done or suffred that, which is peculiar to one nature onely, which thing, the fathers vsed to call the communion or comixtion or likenesse of properties of speache. It appertayneth to the diuine nature, that Christ is sayde to be from euerlasting, and before Abraham was borne: who notwithstanding, after his humane nature was borne afterwarde in a time appoynted. And the sonne of God is sayde to haue suffred and dyed, where his diuinitie can neyther suffer nor die. And yet it is trulye sayde. For he that was truely the sonne of God, wherein he was able to die, dyed. According to the same reason, the sonne of man was sayde to be in heauen, when he was vppon the earth, because the same touching his godheade pierced the heauens also, although according to his body, hee was in the earth, and there communed with Nicodemus. Which things if we obserue in this place, it shall appeare, that Iesus Christe tooke his humane nature, which he receyued of the virgins bodye,

into

into heauen. For it can not be vnderstanded of his diuine nature, whereof it is saide: I fill heauen and earth **Againe**: Heauen is my throne, and the earth is my footestool. And whereas the Godhead is not moued from place to place, but is infinite & immeasurable, ascension by no meanes agreeth therewith. And yet we truely saye that God ascended, because Christ who is very God, ascended in his manhood. And yet we deuide not Christ into partes, or denye the vnitie of person, as did one Nestorius, but we make a difference betwene the natures of Christ, and their properties: as he deuideth not man, that maketh a distinction betwene the actions of the soule, and of the bodye, which are knowne to be much different. And here that saying of Austen is to be well marked, where he forbiddeth vs to take euery thing in God to be euery where as God. And Christ ment not to proue the presence of his Godheade, by the extending of his body into all places, but by the operation of his holy spirite.

But the Scriptures shewe also the place into which he ascended. And Luke sayeth, that he was taken vp on high. And the Angels afterwarde call it heauen, that it might appeare vnto vs, to what place he went. And Marke more expressely signifying the place in heauen, writeth, that he is set downe on the right hande of the Father. We knowe what a great maner holde and affirme of the heauens, which by them vnderstande the kingdom and presence of God. We knowe also that the right hande of God, maye be taken for the felowship of the diuine maiestie and kingdom, into the which, we confesse that Christ is truly taken, according as he sayth: All power is giuen to me in heauen and in earth. But we saye there is here a certaine place assigned, into the which, we one daye shall be receiued, to reigne with Christ for euer. And this sense we drabe out of Christes owne words, speaking of his departure. In my fathers house bee many mansions, or dwellings, which if it were otherwise I woulde haue tolde you. I go to prepare you a place. And if I go to prepare you a place, I will come againe and take you vnto my selfe, that where I am, there may you be also. Coulede he more plainly and expressely declare a certaine place? Paule in the heauenly place and dwelling of the Saintes sheweth vs Christ, saying: Our conuersation is in heauen, from whence we looke for a Sauour, euen the Lorde Iesus Christ. Doth he not here appoynt the same place vnto Christ, into the which our bodies shall once be receiued? To this is to be ioyned, the describing of the maner and order of the resurrection to come, where he sayeth: The Lorde himselfe shall come downe from heauen, with the noyse and voyce of an Archangel, and trumpe of God, and the deade in Christ shall first aryse, and then wee that be on lyue which shall remayne, shall be taken with them in the Clowdes to meete the Lorde, and so shall we alwayes be with him. He sayth that Christ the Lorde shall come, yea descende from heauen, and that it might appeare of what heauen he meaneth, he sayth, that we shall be taken in the Clowdes to meete Christ in the aire. Therfore all these things are to be vnderstanded of some higher place in heauen, where both Christ sitteth and raigneth in his body, and into the which, all the elect shall hereafter be translated.

Howbeit, Luke is most diligent in describing the maner of his ascension. Where first he sayth, that holding vp his handes into heauen, he blessed the Apostles, that is, bade them farewell, and after the common maner of men departing one from another, commended them to the tuition and protection

Hiere. 23.
E say. 66.

Ad Dardanū.

Into what
place Christ
ascended.

Math. 28.

Iohn. 14.

Philip. 3.

1. Thess. 4.

The maner
and order of
Christs ascension.

Pſalm. 104.

The cauſes &
commodities
of Chriſtes
aſcention.1. He openeth
vs the gates
of heauen.

Ephes. 2.

Iohn. 17.

of God almightie. Afterwarde they looking vpon him, he was taken vp into heauen. Which one thing convinceth them of vanitie, and errour, which ſaye Chriſt baniſhed away inuiſibly. For if they herein ſaye true, how was he taken vp on high, the Diſciples looking vpon him? Or would he therefore ſeeme to aſcende, bicauſe he would haue vs beleeue he were ſtill conuerſant on the earth. Herevnto is to be added the miniſterye or ſervice of the Clowde, which as it conueyed him from the earth as in a chariot: euen ſo it caried hym higher than mans light coulde reach to, and tooke him out of ſight. He bleſed the Clowde as a chariot, according to þe ſaying of the Pſalme, which makeſt the Clowds thy Charet. For the Clowde was both a token of heauen, into the which he ſhould aſcende, and alſo bare plaine witneſſe of his heauenly and diuine maieſtie. Wherevnto alſo is to be referred the appearing of the Angels, which he would not onely haue witneſſes, but alſo miniſters of his aſcention. For it was meete that he which bleſed the ſervice of Angels in his conception, natiuitie, temptation, death, and reſurrection, ſhould now likewiſe bleſſe the ſame miniſters, when he would declare the greateſt poynt of his maieſtie. And it ſerued for our profit, bicauſe we might know the maieſtie of our ſauour, and that although he were abſent in bodye, yet that he would eaſily protect and defende vs, by his holye ſpिरite and miniſtery of Angels, whoſe power hath long ſince bene proued by many examples to be infinite and inuincible.

And although theſe be great tokens of Chriſtes diuine maieſtie and power: yet maye we receyue moze comfort of the cauſes, mouing Chriſt to aſcende into heauen. For by them appeareth the great vtilitie that commeth to vs. And firſt, it was requiſite ſo to be, bicauſe of our redemption, and ſaluation, which otherwiſe coulde not be accompliſhed. For whereas by reaſon of ſinne, the gates of heauen were ſhut vp, and ſuch is the corruption of our nature, that Paule ſayth fleſhe and bloude, (that is, man ledde with corrupt and carnal affections) cannot inherite the kingdome of God: it was neceſſarye that the heauens ſhoulde be opened againe by Chriſt, that we might take him for our ſauour and Redeemer. This did Chriſt moſt commodiouſly, by bringing his fleſhe which he tooke of the Virgin into heauen. For who perceyueſt not there is a waye made for our fleſhe into heauen, when he heareth that Chriſtes fleſhe in all poyntes lyke vnto ours (ſinne only excepted) is reſident in heauen? To ſaye nothing in the meane ſeaſon of the permutacion and chaunge here made. For as Chriſt graffeth his ſpिरite in our hartes, to thende it ſhoulde be to vs in this lyfe the earneſt and pledge of our eternall ſaluation: ſo againe he caried into heauen our fleſhe, which he tooke of the virgin Marie, that we myght be certified, as it were by this pledge, that we one daye ſhould in our bodyes inherite the kingdome of heauen. Wherevnto Paule hauing reſpect, writeth: God which is rich in mercy, through the great loue wherewith hee loued vs, euen when wee were deade by reaſon of ſinne, hath quickened vs together with Chriſt (for by Grace are you ſaued) and hath alſo rayſed vs vp againe, and hath alſo made vs ſit with him in heauen. And Paule ſpeaketh not theſe things in vaine, but hath Chriſt the warrantor and Auctor of his ſaying, whoſe Teſtament as it were theſe wordes following are: Father I will that where I am, theſe alſo whome thou haſt giuen me, may be with me. Wherefore that ſtrong and inuincible truſt through the conſideration of his aſcention, ought to be in euerye mans

minde,

minde, that Tertullian speaketh of: Be out of care, or be of good cheere, fleshe and bloude: you haue gotten both heauen, and the kingdome of God in Christ.

Furthermore, by Christs ascention into heauen, as by a publyke triumph, we are certified of the victorie that he hath gotten of the Deuill. For as the Princes of this worlde when they haue vanquished their enemies, retorne home agayne with triumph, wherin the Captaynes of the enemies are led Captiues, and their ensignes displayed, all which, declare the victorie to be herily gotten: so the sonne of God after he had made warre against the Deuill, the Prince of this worlde, and had bitterly subdued him, would after this solemne pompe, in the sight of his friendes, go agayne into heauen, that we might be assured the Deuils power was vanquished, and that we were deliuered from his tyranny. And to this ende Paule seemeth to alledge that saying of the .lxxviii. Psalme. When he was gone vp on high, hee ledde captiuitie captiue, and gaue giftes vnto men. And in another place he writeth: He made an open shewe of rule and power, and triumphed ouer them in his owne person. Therefore as often as the power of Satan, sinne, and death, shall make vs afrayde, so often let vs flye to Christs ascention, wherein he hath giuen vs an euident signe, of victorie gotten of them, and hath sealed the affaires of our redemption, as it were with publike and solemne triumph.

Thirdly, the reason of Priesthoode required that Christ shoulde enter into heauen, whereunto Dauid witnesseth he was assigned, saying: The Lorde hath sworne and will not repent him: Thou art a Priest for euer, after the order of Melchisedech. But the high Priest was wont, once euery yeare to enter into the holy place that was wythin the beyle, and that not without bloude, which because it was a figure of things, it behoued Christ shoulde enter once for all into that very Sanctuary, to saue, into heauen, with his true body and bloude which he tooke of vs, that he might there appeare before God for our sinnes, and appease the wrath of God. Hitherto appertayneth it that Paule sayth: Christ is not entred into a sanctuarye made with handes, but into heauen it selfe, that he myght appeare now before God for vs. Againe: Christ being an high Priest of good thinges to come, came by a greater and a more perfect Tabernacle, not made with handes: that is to saue, not of this building, neyther by the bloude of Goates and Calues, but by his owne blood he entred in once into the holie place, and founde eternall redemption. Of the which, we gather that Christ after he had perfourmed the things he came to doe on earth, entred into heauen, to accomplish that which remained there to be done, that is, to place himselfe there, a Mediatour, intercessour, and aduocate for vs. Whereunto all those thinges are to be referred that are written in the Scripture, touching the office of an Intercessor and aduocate. And here is no small fruite of Christs ascention. For as often as the conscience of our sinnes troubleth vs, and that we thinke heauen is shut against vs by reason of our sinne: so often we may flye to the consideration of the ascention, as to a most safe sanctuarye, and be assured that he is in heauen which maketh intercession for vs, who by reason of his merite, conueth our vncleanesse, and reconcileth vs vnto God. Iohn the Apostle teacheth vs the same in these wordes. Little children, I write these thinges vnto you, to thende you shoulde not sinne: But if any man sinne, we haue an aduocate with the father, Iesus Christ the righteous. And Paule sayth: Who shall be

2. It confirmeth Christs victorie.

Ephes.4.

Coloss.2.

3. Christ appeareth an intercessor for vs, in heauen.
Psalme.110.
Leuit.16.

Hebrues.2.

1.Iohn.2.

Roma. 8.

The apparitions of the Angels.

Actes. 1.

Against the corporall presence of Christ, on the earth.

1
Ephes. 4.

2

3

Math. 18.

be able to charge the elect of God with sinne? It is God that iustifieth, who is it that condemneth? It is Christ that is deade, yea rather that is risen againe, who is also on the right hande of God, and maketh intercession for vs.

Moreover, because the Apostles as yet perceyued not these things, & therefore being astonied with Christes sodayne departure looked wishely vp into heauen, & missed his bodily presence which they were wont to haue: it behooued they should be more fully instructed. Therefore Angels clothed in white garments appeared to them, which spake to them on this wyse: You men of Galiley, why stande you looking vp into heauen? The same I E S V S which is taken from you vp into heauen, shall so come, euen as you haue seene him go into heauen. There is in these wordes first a reprehension, and then a singular comfort and consolation. We therefore will speake of ech of them, as much as this place shall require. The beginning of their saying seemeth to haue in it some reprehension: You men of Galiley (say they) why stand you looking vp into heauen? Here the Angels accuse not onely the deede of the Disciples, but also the affection and ignorance of their minds. For the Apostles therefore lift vp their eyes into heauen, because they sawe Christ was taken vp in the Clowde. And the Angels denie it not, but rather confesse that it so was. They were worthy of reprehension, that being so often admonished of Christes departure, and instructed so often with promises that they should haue the holy ghost, would yet desire to haue Christes bodily presence, and seeke him both with minde and sight, & after a sort wayte, that he should come downe againe vnto them. This therefore the Angels reprehende, as if they should saye, what ignorance & grossenesse of hart is this of yours? why marueyle you still at Christes departure? Hearde you not before how he must thus depart? Hath he not promised you the holy ghost to be your comforter and tutor? why therefore wayte you not for him, and let passe this bodily presence, vntill the daye he shall come in the glozy of the father, to iudge the quicke and the dead, as you may remember he tolde you before this?

And if we conferre the wordes of the Angels, with the things spoken a little before, in the storpe of the Ascension, it shall appeare as cleare as day, that there ought no such bodily presence of Christ Iesu to be established on the earth from henceforth, as they feyne, which saye that the body of Christ, which was borne of the virgin Marie, which honge on the crosse, which was buried, is eaten in the supper corporally, & substantially, and really handled with the hands of the faithful. They see that the hystory of the ascension, maketh against this grosse opinion, and therefore they make of it a disparition or vanishing away, as before I sayde. Further, they abuse the places of the Scripture. First, they alledge the wordes of Paule, Christ is ascended aboue all heauens to fulfill all things. Whereupon they gather that the condicion of his body being chaunged, is spred ouer all places, as well supernall as infernall, and so he filleth all things with his body. Then flying to his diuinitie, by reason thereof, they saye it must needes be, that his humane nature should be euery where likewise, because it is vnited and knitte with the diuine. And they thinke they haue founde Gordius knot, whyle they say: such is the coniunction of the natures, that it can not be sundred by death, how much lesse then can this grosse distance of places separate it? They haue also the promises of Christ, whereby they thinke their opinion confirmed. For these be his wordes: Where two or three bee gathered in my name, there

am I in the middest of them. **Agayne** : I am with you vntill the ende of the worlde. They ioyne to these the wordes of the supper, and crie out till they be hoarce againe : This is my body, which they make also wordes of promise, as though Christ by them, had promised a reall and substantiall presence of his bodye. But the answer is easie to all these.

As touching the place of Paule, we will not dispute of the heauens after the maner of the Philosophers. We knowe that Aristotle appoynteth no place without the compasse and circle of the heauens. But it is not laborsfull to rest vpon the authorite of an heathen man, when matter of fayth is in question. Paule speaketh of the heauens that be aboue vs, and bicause they be accounted among the parts of the world, and shall melt in the fire of the last day, he sayth, that Christ is ascended aboue them, to testifie that he is now out of the circuite of this corruptible worlde, and taken into that place, which from euerlasting was appoynted for the elect, and is subiect to no decay or destruction. Therfore the more they bge that Christ is ascended aboue all heauens, thereby it appeareth the more, hee is gone forth of the worlde. Paule addeth : to fulfill all thinges, which they expounde of Christes body, bicause they will shew themselues grosse and foolish enough. For who seeth not a foolish and more than childish consequence herein : Christ hath carried his body aboue the heauens, and all the partes of the worlde visible. Ergo, the bodye of Christ filleth all the worlde corporally and substantially. And this is their maner of reasoning. But Paule in this place speaketh of the Prophecies of the olde lawe, or (as some other saye) of the power and maiestie of Christ. Other expounde it of the spirituall grace and giftes, which Christ after he had receyued all power, shed vpon men, as Ioel before prophesied. But whether of these it is, here is appointed no corporall presence of Christ vpon earth. Christ had fulfilled all the things prophesied before, of his incarnation, passion, death and resurrection. Nowe remainned his ascension, whereof there were prophecies, and where through the businesse of our saluation (as we afore declared) shoulde be perfited and ended. He therefore ascended, that herein nothing shoulde be left vnfulfilled. And if anye man will haue it vnderstanded rather of the maiestie and power of Christ, which he declareth by the bestowing of his heavenly giftes, I will not contende with him. For thereto the sentence commeth, bicause Christ hauing consummate and finished our saluation in his manhooe, sayth, hee hath receyued all power in heauen and in earth. And then he sayde hee woulde send his holy spirite, when he went from this worlde vnto his father. Yea, he sayde : It is expedient for you that I go : for if I go not, that comforter will not come vnto you.

It is no lesse pieuiste where they reason from Christes diuinitie to his humanitie. We confesse surely that these two natures are ioyned together in Christ, and that Christs person by reason of them ought not to be diuided, & we say not that they be disioyned or seuered by reason of his death. But that which no godly man will denie was done in hys death, that here also is to be obserued. In his death the distinction of the natures and properties remainned whole and safe. For his humane nature suffred death, which the diuine coulde not. His humane nature suffred the crosse and diuers dolours, which cannot happen to the diuine nature. And he, which as he was very man, dyed vpon the crosse, and being deade was buried : the

same

Math. 28.

4

1. The .iiij.
to the Ephe-
sians.

Luke. 24.

Math. 28.

Iohn. 14.

2. Christes
Godheade
downeth not
hys man-
hooe, ney-
ther careth
it through
euerie thing.

In his Epi-
stle to Dar-
danus.

3. The pla-
ces of Ma-
thewe. 18.
and. 28.

Ioan. 4. 16.

4. The
wordes of
the supper.

same as verye God, shooke the earth, toke the light from the sunne, and wrought effectually in the mindes of men, and shewed most euident tokens of his godheade. If the same be here considered, this matter shall be easily perceyued. For Christ touching his diuine nature is euery where, and hath his operation euery where. The same concerning his humane nature, is contained in a certaine place of heauen, which is the eternall dwelling of all those that be blessed. And for all this we separate not the diuinitie from the humanitie, when we say it filleth all places, and is euery where present. But we follow the rule of Augustine, who sayth: We must beware that we doe not so defende or affirme the diuinitie of his manhoode, that wee take away the veritie of his bodye, &c.

By these also we are taught, in what sense Christes promises are to be taken, where he sayth, he will be present with vs vnto the ende of the worlde. For we expounde them of the presence and power of his Godheade. For Christ is present with those that be his, by his diuine power, and by operation of his holy spirite, whereby he ruleth, guideth, keepeth safe, and defendeth them. He is with them by his grace and merite, that they fall not into the snares of Synne and Satan, but stande fast in the fauour and friendship of God the father. As touching his bodily presence, by other his wordes, where he doth inculcate diuers times, that he must go out of the worlde, and that he can tary no longer in the worlde, we learne that in these wordes he speaketh nothing concerning the same. And if it lyke them to expounde these former promises of the presence of his body, then where he sayth in another place he shall no longer tary in the world, that must needes be vnderstanded of his godly presence. For without we reconcile these places so diuers in themselves, by making a difference of his natures, & enterchaunge of properties of speech, we shall be in much perplexitie and vncertaine. What shall these men therefore get, but while they contende about his bodily presence, bereyue themselves of his spirite and diuine protection, and as Terence the Poet sayth, with reason become madde? Neyther admit we here their colde and chainelesse refuge, whereby they would creepe away, vnder the inuisible conuersation of Christes body here on earth. For Christ speaketh not of the manner and qualitie of the thing, but of the thing it selfe, and denyeth that he taryeth any longer in the worlde. But with what reason should he so say, if he taried in the world inuisibly? And in the. xxiij. of Mathew, he biddeth vs not to beleue them which shoulde saye, towarde the ende of the worlde, he is here or there, in the Closet, Spence, or Buttry.

Of these things now we may be easily gathered, how the wordes of the supper are to be vnderstanded. We knowe that Christ reached breade to his Disciples and sayde: This is my body. But we say, it is a sacramentall kind of speech, whereby (as is commonly seene) the name of the thing signified, is attributed to the signe. After which sort, Circumcision was called the couenant, and the Easter feast the Passeouer. Neyther obserue we this in this matter without cause, for so the verity of Christes body enforceth vs, wherof we haue already spoken. And Christ himselfe in the Gospell of S. Iohn willing to take the grosse opinion of his flesh from his Disciples, sendeth them to his ascention, that there they might learne, how his body coulde not substantially & really be eaten, but that they must vnderstand a spiritual eating, which was by faith. Looke the. vij. of Iohn. I passe ouer many other things

that

that might be sayde, bicause I would not be to long in wordes. It is our part to holde fast the plaine hystory of the ascention, and with our harts lifted by by faith, to seeke Christ in heauen, that wee may be fed everlastingly, with the vertue and merite of his flesh and bloude.

But let vs retorne to the Aungels, whose wordes haue in them a marueylous comfort. For as they blaine the grosse opinion of the Disciples, desiring the bodily presence of Christ: so they comfort them with the promise of his last comming. This same Iesus (say they) which is taken vp from you, shall so come as you haue seene him go hence. The Aungels promise a visible comming of Christ. And any comming inuisible, beside that, which is by his holy spirite, the Scripture knoweth not. That is a visible comming, which we professe in the articles of our faith, in which he shall come, to iudge the quick and the dead. Many things are saide in the scripture touching this comming, as we may see in Daniel. 7. & 12. And Christ diligently describeth the same. Math. 24. 25. & Iohn. 5. He would also the Apostles shoulde be admonished hereof in this place, bicause the remembraunce thereof, serueth much both for our instruction and comfort. For if, according to the saying of the sonne of Syrach, the remembrance of death bridleth the desire of sinne. How much more shall it be restrayned, if we consider in our minde the ymage and counterfaite of the last iudgement, where we all shall stand before the iudgement seate of Christ, to receyue euery one of vs, according as he hath done in this body, whether it be good or bad. What shall it then profite a man, to haue gayned all the worlde, if he shall lose his soule. Agayne, there cometh to vs by remembring of that daye, marueylous consolation. For hee that shall come to be a reuenger of all euill, and a punisher of the wicked, shall appeare the Redeemer of his people, whom he shall make partakers of his kingdome and table, glorifying them both in bodye and soule. Wherefore speaking of the signes, that shall go before the latter daye, he sayth: When these things beginne to come to passe, lift vp your heades, for your redemption draweth neare. And Iob speaking of Christ comming to the iudgement, saith: I knowe that my Redeemer liueth, &c. It behoued therfore, that the Apostles shoulde be admonished hereof, that being boldened with this hope, they might passe and overcome, the present daungers, and grievous troubles that were to come. In the meane time let vs thinke, that it is our dutie often to thinke vpon the same, whereby we may both repress the naughtye desires of the flesh, and haue a good courage in the midst of daungers and distresse, and so happily finishing the race of this lyfe, may liue for euer with Iesu Christ our Lorde: to whom be blessing, honour, glory and power for euer. Amen.

A comfort
of the last
comming of
Christ.

2. Corin. 5.
Rom. 14.
Math. 16.

Luke. 21.

Iob. 19.

The sixt Homely.

THE N returned they vnto Hierusalem, from the mount that is called Oliuete, which is from Hierusalem a Sabbath daies iourney. And when they were come in, they went vp into a Parlour, where abode both Peter and Iames, and Iohn and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Barthilmewe and Matheue, Iames the sonne of Alphæus, and Simon Zelotes, and Iudas the brother of Iames. These all continued with one accorde in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Iesus, and with his brethren.

The argu-
ment and vse
of this place.



Although our Lorde and Sauour Je-
sus Christ, hath taken his bodey from earth into
heauen by his glorious ascention: yet may we not
thinke that he therefore hath cast aside the care of our
saluation. For it cannot be that that good shepheard
can forget them, whome he did boughsafe to redeeme
with the price of his bloude. This appeareth aswell
by manye other arguments, as specially by this that
happened in his ascention, as wee sawe erewhile. For

whyle the Apostles, abashed with his sodayne departure, stode looking vp
into heauen, not knowing what to doe: he sendeth his Angells by whose
ministrye, they are not onely instructed concerning his ascention, but also
they heare a marueylous comfort touching his comynge againe. Which
comfort we see was effectuous, by that which fell out therof. For Luke goeth
on with his hystorie, and sheweth what the Apostles did after Christ was
taken from them, we will speake of eche of these things in order, to thende
the more learning, instruction, and consolation maye come vnto vs therby.

1. The Apo-
stles returne
to Jerusalem
Luke. 24.

First of all, they returne againe into the Citie. For after they had wor-
shipped, as Luke sayth: they returned againe to Hierusalem, and being ga-
thered together in the upper stoye of the house, which was appointed them
to be in, they waited for the spirite promised of God the father, and Jesus
Christ. It was from Mount Oliuete whence Christ ascended into heauen,
into the Citie a Sabboth dayes iourney, which after the authoritie of
Hierome, is counted a two myles.

An example
of the obedie-
nce of faith.

Here in these thinges we haue a singular example of the obedience of
faith, which it becommeth vs well to folloewe. For the Apostles go agayne
into the Citie, not of their owne head and counsaile, but as the Lord com-
maunded them, which (as wee perceyued in the beginning of this booke)
charged them not to depart from Hierusalem, nor to seperate themselues
one from another, befoze they had receyued from heauen the holye ghost.
And yet there were diuers thinges, that might haue perswaded them the
contrary. Amongst which, the feare of present daunger and hostile entrap-
pinges of the Jewes, seemeth not to be eyther lightest or least. And who
coude thinke to be safe in such a Citie, as had bene bled to slaye the Pro-
phetes, and whose handes were yet embued, with the bloude of the sonne
of God. Againe, the small commodiousnesse and vnhandsonnesse of the
place, might haue turned the mindes of diuers awaye. For in one house,
yea in a pce of one house, (as may be gathered by þat that followeth) about
an hundred and twentie persons dwelled together, which coude not be
without great trouble, as any wise man maye vnderstande. Beside yet a
more grieuous temptation, cloked with the pretext of faith and religion,
that is to saye, that they knewe the holye ghost, for whose cause they shoulde
tarie in the Citie, was tyed to no one place, but (as Christ sayth) breatheth
wheresoeuer it will. So that they might thinke it not onely in bayne, but
also a foolishnesse to wayte in such a daungerous place, for the sending of
the holye ghost, which might as well be giuen them in another place as
there. And surely it is lyke that diuers such thoughts arose in them, seeing
there is no man ignorant how many thinges they that be in feare vse to cast

Iohn. 3.

in their mindes. But they overcome all these things with the fayth onely that they gaue to Christes wordes, and despising all aswell perill, as counsell of mans reason, they purpose to obey the commaundements of Christ. Neither wanteth that holy obedience a most happy successe. For they be both safe in that bloudy Citie, and they also, not many dayes after receiue the holy ghost, as Christ had promysed. Of this example we ought to make a generall lawe and rule, that is to saye, that we must walke in the vocation of God, and in whatsoeuer his commaundements obediently, and that we suffer not our selues, for any reasons that the fleshe can make, to be pulled from our dutie. For whereas our God is holpe, and a most louing father to mankinde, he commaundeth nothing but that which is both holpe, and healthfull for vs. For all his iudgements are righteousnesse and truth, and as Paule sayth, this is the purpose and ende of Gods will, that all men should be saued. And bicause he is omnipotent, he defendeth and maintayneth them that walke in his vocation, and keepe his commaundementes, and suffreth no hurt to happen vnto them. The holy worshippers of God are sometimes tempted, bicause it is necessary their fayth shoulde be exercised and tryed. But bicause God is faythfull, hee suffreth them not to bee tempted aboue their strength, but in their temptation maketh a waye that they may beare it. There are infinite examples hereof beside this that we haue in hande. Abraham is called out of his native countrie, and is commaunded to go into a straunge countrie, which he knoweth not, inhabited with wicked dwellers. But bicause he obeyeth Gods calling, all thinge succedeth luckily, and he is increased and instored there, not only with riches, but also hath the friendship of the mightiest in the countrie. His posteritie dwell there also, and bicause they walke in Gods vocation, they liue in safetie amongst them, whom the destruction of the Citie of Sichem, myght seme with iust desire of reuenge to arme against them. But God is their faythfull protector, which caused this saying to sound in the mindes and eares of the Chananites. Touch not mine annointed, and doe my Prophetes no harme. Let all men of what state or degre soeuer they be, applye the consideration of these things vnto themselves, and let them remember that there is a most large blessing, and an infallible promise of Gods helpe, ioyned to the commaundementes of God, which vndoubtedly they shall enioy, that will endeuour to obey them. See touching this blessing, Deuter. 28. and Leuit. 26. But chiefly we must take hærde, that we admit not the counsell of mans witte in the things, which we see expressly by Gods worde bidden or forbidden. For this is a most present plague, which casteth aside all endeuour of obedience, and maketh all our lyfe to be hatefull before God. For there is no commaundement of God so holy, so easie, so healthfull, wherein our fleshe will not finde some difficultie, and daunger, yea, and some colour of vnrightheousnesse and iniquitie. Obedience of fayth is required, which as Paule sayth, doth captiuate all mans vnderstanding, beateth downe all the counsell of mans reason, and bringeth whole man to the obedience of God and his worde. Hereunto is to be referred that, that God prescribeth in the lawe by these wordes. Thou shalt not seeke after thine owne heart, or thine owne eyes, after the which, you vse to go a whooring, but you shall remember rather, and doe all my commaundements, & be holy vnto your God. And againe: Ye shall adde nothing to my worde which I haue comaunded you, nor take nothing

I.ij.

there-

1. Timoth. 2.

1. Corin. 10.

Psalm. 105.

2. Cor. 10.

Numer. 15.

Deut. 4. 12.

therefrom. And if anye man require examplēs of them which haue euill thrined by breaking of Gods commaundement, he shall finde both other wheres, and in the hystory of Saule, diuers. See, 1. Samuel. 13. & 15. But let vs haste to the rest.

2. The
names of the
Apostles.

In the seconde place, Luke rehearseth the names of the Apostles, and that not without a great purpose. For besides that they, whom Iesus Christ appoynteth to be the teachers of all the worlde, ought well to be knowne, least naughtye deceyuers might challenge to them, the office and authoritie of the same: it was necessary that we might knowe surely howe they after their foule forsaking of Christ, were restored againe to their former place and dignitie. For all men knowe how shamefully they yelded, when Christ was taken by the souldiers, and by the high Priestes seruants. For then they all fled and left him. And Peter which presumed so much of his owne strength, committed the griuouſer offence bicause hee thre times denyed him. Therfore men might doubt, not without some cause, whether the Lord had taken such as they were into his fauour againe, and whether such cowardly shydebacks might be belueued. Therfore to put all doubt out of our mindes, and that we shoulde not thinke their foule fall at the first, shoulde preiudice the truth of their doctrine: the holpe ghost woulde haue them againe by name to be rehearsed (Iudas onely excepted) that were appointed before Christes death, to preache the Gospell vnto all the worlde. And if you conferre the nameroll of this place with the things written, Math. 10. Marc. 3. and Luke. 6. you shall finde no maner of difference or disagreeing.

An example
of the goodnesse
of God.

Roma. 5.
Iohn. 21.

Zach. 1.
Ezech. 16.

The Apostles
are men
despised, and
of no reputa-
tion.

Nowe this is a singular example of the goodnesse of God, which not only would forgive so dishonest a forsaking of him, but also woulde restore such as they, to their former office and dignitie. Here truly as Paule sayth, Grace abounded where trespasse abounded. For Peter which had thre times denyed Christ, heareth Christ thre times againe say vnto him, feede my shepe. Hereof let them take comfort whose consciences are griued with sinne, that they dispaire not, eyther bicause of the heynousnesse or multitude of their sinnes. Turne vnto mee (sayth the Lord) and I will turne vnto you. As sure as I liue, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he returne and liue.

This also is woorthy the considering, that in this nameroll, the names of none, but suche as were the most vilest, and contemned persons in the iudgement of the worlde are rehearsed. For first he reckeneth Peter, Iames, Iohn and Andrewe, who before that time we reade were rascall fishers. Here is also numbred Mathew the Publicane, a defamed person, by reason of his former trade of liuing. As touching the nobilitie, riches, or honours of the other, there is nothing any where mentioned. But the sonne of God which hath power ouer the mindes of men, might haue brought to his obedience the sonnes of the Princes, and high Priestes, to haue spred abroad the Gospell by the ministry of those, who were of authoritie and power in the worlde, but it pleased him to chouse base and despised persons, both for that we shoulde knowe that God despiseth none in the worlde, bee he neuer so vile and contemned, and also for that we shoulde learne to iudge of matters of faith and religion, not according to mans authoritie, but after the knowledge of the truth and worde of God. For a most griuous and perillous errour are they in, which when they shoulde pronounce of matters of the faith, turne their eyes to the authoritie of men: as though faith and re-

ligion

ligion depended of the iudgement of men, and not rather of the onely word of God. Tertullian a most auncient writer derideth the Romanes, bicause they consecrated or allowed their Gods, after the appoyntment of the Senators, and would admit none for Gods, but such as lyked the Senate. And so doe they in these dayes, which pronounce of faith and doctrine according to the renoune and authoritie of men, which kinde of people, are daylye euerywhere sene. And for this cause our faith and religion is chieslye condemned of our aduersaries, bicause it hath fewe Emperours and Kings, fewe Popes, Cardinals and Bishops, that followe it. But howe folowe these men are deceyued, the example of the Jewes declareth, whome we reade to haue stumbled at the same stone. For when they perceyued the doctrine of Christ somewhat lyked their ministers, by and by they beginne to oppresse them with the authoritie of men, saying: Are yee also deceyued? doe any of the Princes beleue in him, or of the Phariseyes? But this people that know not the lawe are accursed. Let vs therefore consider the counsell of God which (as Paule sayth) vseth to choose the foolish, contemned and vile things, and of no reputation in the worlde, to confounde all wisedome, power, and authoritie of the worlde. And thus doth he not without cause. For hereby it appeareth that we ought to glory or reioyce in nothing, but in God alone. Let others obiect vnto vs Emperours, Kings, Bishops, Cardinals, Councels and Uniuersties, Doctors in Scarlot, and our Maisters illuminate, and whatsoeuer else in the worlde is glorious, by pretence of wisedome and holynesse, and on the other side, let them scozne and morke the miserable and despised state of them in this worlde, which haue professed the Gospell, and we will answer with Iesus Christ our sauour and doctor: Wee thanke thee, O father, Lorde of heauen and earth, bicause thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and reuealed them to the little ones, euen so father, was it thy good will and pleasure.

But Luke writeth that there were women also in the company of y Apostles, which some thinke were they only that came with Christ when he came last out of Galiley to Hierusalem. But as I will not denie but some of y number might abide with the Apostles: so I thinke this place may be very well vnderstanded of the Apostles Wyues. For the Gospell plainely expresseth that Peter had a wyfe. And if we affirme the same of Mathewe, we doe it not in vaine, seeing it plainly appeareth he both had a dwelling of his owne, and also kept a familie and houtholde. And Paule manifestly testifieth, that the Apostles led about their Wyues when they preached the Gospell. Although I am not ignorant how the maintayners of vnchaste singlenesse, expounde that place of certaine faithfull women that followed the Apostles. But the pious men perceyue not what iniurie they doe vnto the Apostles, whyle they thus saye. For what excuse is left for the Apostles, if they leaue their owne Wyues, and carie about other mens. God defende therefore that we shoulde thinke such absurditie, piousnesse and dishonestie in the most holy Legates and Ambassadors of Iesus Christ. I surely beleue that the Apostles Wyues came from Galiley with their husbandes the Apostles, for whom it was not lawfull to depart from the Citie, vntill this present daye. For where they were ordayned to take part with the Apostles, of all their traueyles and daungers, it was requisite; that they shoulde be prepared and strengthened, with some speciall gift of the holy ghost. They that contend

Iohn. 7.

1. Corin. 1.

Math. 22.

The Wyues
of the Apostles.

1. Corin. 9.

and

Hebrues. 13.

Marie the
Virgin, mo-
ther of Christ

and a firme that single lyfe, is of necessitie to be enioined vnto persons ecclesiasticall, are more foolish than whom we neede much to confute, in so great light of the Gospell, considering as it is playne vnto all men: that wedlocke is honorable in all persons, and the bed vndefiled.

Amongest these women also was the holy Virgin, the mother of Iesus Christ, and certaine brethren of Christes, whom according to the custome of the Hebreu tongue, wee vnderstande to haue bene his kinsmen. Christ a little before his death, had committed the tuition of hir to Iohn the beloued Disciple, which tooke the charge of hir vpon him, & most faithfully kept hir. And here is the last place, that the Scriptures make any more mention of hir. Nicephorus writeth that she dyed in the daies of Claudius the Emperour, when she had liued fiftie and nyne yeares. Eusebius in his Chronicles sayth, she was assumed or taken vp into heauen, but he confesseth this to be an vncertaine doctrine or tradition, because he addeth: as some write it was reuealed vnto them. In the dayes afterwarde sprang vp certaine Monkes, who were not ashamed to fayne a whole storie of hir Assumption, whereof the olde writers knew nothing, as appeareth by Epiphanius, writing against the heretikes called Antidicomarianitæ: If some seeme to haue erred, let them seeke the steppes of the Scripture, and they shall finde neyther the death of Mary, neyther whether she died or died not, neyther whether she were buried or not buried. And a little way after: I saye not that she remained still on lyue, neyther affirme I that she dyed. For the Scripture passeth the mynde of man, and leaueth the matter in suspence, by cause of that precious and most excellent vessell, least any man might suspect any carnall things of hir. To the which I adde that it seemeth incredible, the holy ghost would haue so marueylous an Assumption concealed, if there had bene any, seeing he caused the translation of Enoch and Ely, so diligently to be written. The things that after Christs ascention happened to hir, he would should vtterly be forgotten, least they might giue any occasion of superstition, which he knewe would growe about the worshipping of hir. And surely it is marueyle the holy ghost, would haue the things that concerned his mother, to be kept in silence, and the doings and doctrine of the Apostles, to be written with such diligence. But we are hereby admonished, & we should not be so occupied, about the superstitious worshipping of them that had bene men, as about the doctrine of the Apostles. In the meane season it shall profite vs, to marke howe Christ Iesus, appoynted to his beloued mother and deere kinsfolke, so weake a succour and safegarde. For if we consider the Apostles after the iudgement of the worlde, they had no power, no riches, no authoritie, no armour, whereby to defende that most holy vessell, of the grace and glory of God, against the assaultes of the world. Why therefore doth he not rather commend hir, to the trust of some mightie Prince, whose mynde and will he myght easily encline, to take the charge of hir: But he that hath mens harts in his rule, needeth no fleshly succors for the defence of his beloued. Therefore the charge that Iohn had of hir, was sufficient for the blessed Virgin. Let vs also learne to put all our trust, not in mans helpe, but in the protection of the most highest, neyther let vs be discouraged, if being forsaken of great personages, we haue none to fauour vs but only such as are strengthlesse, and whose selues haue neede of Patrones and defenders, and are subiect to all mens iniuries. For it becometh vs to saye with David: The Lorde is my light and my saluation,

whom

whom then shall I feare? The Lorde is the strength of my lyfe, of whome then shall I be afrayde? The Lorde is on my side, I will not feare what man doth vn- to mee.

Last of all, the Euangelist declareth what the Apostles did, whyle the sending of the holpe ghost was deferred. For if we number the dayes, we shall finde it tenne dayes after Christes ascention, before the holpe ghost was giuen. For Christ was fourtie dayes still conuersant with his Disci- ples, and proued the veritie of his resurrection, by manye argumentes. And the fiftie daye after the feast of Pascheouer, Luke in the seconde Chap- ter following, sayth, the holy ghost was sent. In the meane season, they a- bode with one consent in prayers and supplication. And although the ar- gument or matter of the prayers which they made, be not expressed: yet of the circumstances it may easily be gathered what they prayed. For what else should they praye for, which knewe their owne weakenesse, and sawe such a burthen layde on their shoulders, then that God woulde hasten the sending of his holy spirite, and bouchsafe to defende them from falling: for they had learned by their first sliding back, how vaine and of no value mans strength is in Gods affayres, except we be bpholden by the present ayde of his diuine grace.

Let vs here obserue howe Luke sayth, they were continually occupied in prayer and supplication, which otherwys were furnished with most large promises, and were endued with great fayth. For if we reade in Iohn what Christ did with his Disciples a little before his death, we shall see the holpe ghost so often promised, that it was almost tedious. And being risen from death againe, he put them diuers times in remembrance of the same. And that they beleued the promises of Christ, it appeareth plainely by their re- turne into the Citie. For vnlesse they had beleued that Christ would be as good as his promise, they would neuer haue gone backe againe into so blou- dy a Citie, and to here such daunger was. Therefore, faith is no let why we should not perseuer and abyde continually in prayers and good woorkes. I knowe there are diuers, that caull about the thinges spoken of fayth, which only iustificieth and saueth, as though it made prayer vnprofitable, and ex- tinguished, or at least, much hindered good woorkes. But these men so farre swaue from the truth, that there is no more effectuous prouocation to good woorkes, than that that springeth in our mindes of fayth. Maye, if we be not furnished with fayth, wee can neyther praye profitablye, nor be fer- uent in good woorkes. For, howe shall they call vpon him in whom they be- leue not? sayth Paule. And howe shall God accept our prayers, except we conceyue sure confidence of his good will towarde vs? Last of all, where as we naturally abhorre from good woorkes, it cannot be, that we shoulde geue our selues wholly therevnto, vnlesse we be sure, that they please God the father, for Iesus Christes sake. To saye nothing, howe it is impossible to please God without fayth, and howe, whatsoever is not of faith is sinne.

The Apostles and they that be with them, ioyne two thinges to their prayers, without the which, our prayer is of no force or auayle before God, that is to saye, bnanimitie and perseuerance. Unanimitie or agreement is needefull, bicause wee be the children of one father, as we professe in the Lordes prayer, saying: Our father which art in heauen. &c. But what father is so retchlesse and carelesse, to suffer his children to be at discorde among them-

Psalm. 127.
&c. 118.

3. What the
Apostles bes-
ing gathered
together did.

Faith is no
let why wee
shoulde not
pray.

Rom. 10.

Hebrues. 11.
Roma. 14.

In prayers
must be bna-
nimitie and
perseuerance.

Math. 5.

Psalme. 13.
Habac. 1.

Esaie. 49.

Psalme. 56.

Luke. 11.
& 12.

themselves. And the law of nature teacheth vs, that they that be one mans children, and of one inheritance, should loue and agree together. But as many as by faith are grafted in Christ, are borne of the same seed, to save, the incorruptible and immortall seed of Gods worde, to be the children of God, and heyres of his kingdome in heauen: yea, to save more, they are made members of one body, and acknowledge one heade, and are quickened with one, and the same spirite. Is it possible therefore that such, can be boyde of loue & con corde among themselves? Doe they not through hatred and enmitie, seperate themselves from the body of Christ, and commit horrible hypocrisie, while they dare lyke true children of GOD, at common prayer, appeare in the sight of GOD: Therefore in our prayers ought that thing chieflie to haue place, that Christ requyrez of them, which come to doe sacrifice, saying: If thou offer thy gyft at the aultare, and there remember that thy brother hath ought agaynst thee: leaue there thy gyft before the aultare, and go and bee reconcyled vnto thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. For if we must take heede, that our brother haue no cause of hatred against vs, how much more must we beware, that we swell not in hatred agaynst our brother. We must haue no lesse consideration of perseuering or continuance in prayer, forasmuch as God manye times, deferreth long the helpe he promisseth vs, and almost seemeth to haue no care at all of vs: which thing caused the holiest men to burst forth into these sayings: How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for euer? Howe long wilt thou hyde thy face from me? how long shall I crye and thou wilt not heare? But in such cogitations we must remember, that God cannot forget vs, nor cease to care for such, as he hath boughsased to redeme, with the bloud of his sonne. For he sayth in the Prophete. Can the mother forget hir yong Infant so, that she will not haue pittie, vpon the babe of hir owne body? but admit they be forgetfull, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I haue grauen thee in both my hands. And Dauid sayth: Thou tellest my flittings and puttest my teares in thy bottoll. Are not these things noted in thy booke? Therefore when God deferreth the help we looke for, he doth it for this only cause, to try our faith & pacience, and yet (as I sayd before) he suffreth vs not to be tempted aboue our strength. Wherefore, euen then must we chieflie, bende all the force of our faith, & call for his helpe, praying continually. And of what force this perseuerance or importunitie is before God, Iesus Christ hath taught vs in very fitte parabes: therfore let vs diligently doe, that the Apostles did whyle they waited for the holy ghost. For we also haue neede of the holy ghost, to brydle the desires of the fleshe, and to strengthen vs in hope and faith. Let vs make our selues ready to receyue him with obedience, vnanimitie, and perseuerance in prayer, that being quickened and illuminate with him in this present worlde, we may leade a lyfe acceptable to his diuine Maiestie, and at length lyue in heauen with Iesus Christ our Sauour: to whom be blessing, honour, glory and power for euer. Amen.

The seuenth Homely.

In those dayes Peter stood vp in the middes of the Disciples, and sayde: (the number of names that were together, were about an hundred and twentye) ye men and brethren, this Scripture must needs haue bene fulfilled, which the

the holy ghost through the mouth of Dauid spake before of Iudas, which was guyde to them that tooke Iesus. For he was numbred with vs, and had obtayned fellowship in this ministracion. And the same hath nowe possessed a plot of ground with the rewarde of iniquitie, and when he was hanged, hee burst a sunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it is knowne to all the inhabiteurs of Hierusalem: insomuch that the same felde is called in their mother tongue Acheldama, that is to say, the bloudy felde.



Saint LVKE hitherto, hath declared what the Apostles did in their owne priuate case, after Christ departed from the earth, attributing to them true obedience, bnitie of mindes, and continuance in prayer. And these verily are wholesome exercises, wherewith we must prepare our selues duely to receyue the holpe ghost, who entreth not into a frowarde soule, and whome the worlde cannot receyue, but contemneth and derideth such cogitations and studies. Nowe in this place he beginneth to declare what the Apostles first did, how they settled themselves to the publike ministry of the Church, which was committed vnto them. And this was the substitution of Matthee, in the place of Iudas the traytour and reprobate. For where Christ would haue the Apostles to be twelue in number, whom hee ordayned to be Iudges of the twelue Trybes of Israel, it was requisite the same number should be fulfilled, least the falshood of Iudas should any way hinder the ordinaunce of Christ.

In the meane season the example of the Apostles admonisheth vs, that the chiefe care of the Church ought to be in providing to haue fitte & meete ministers. For, how shal they beleue in him (sayth Paule) of whom they haue not hearde? howe shal they heare without a Preacher, howe shal they preach except they be sent? And the same Apostle in another place, sayth, that himselfe, Apollo and Cephas were the ministers of God, by whome the Corinthians beleued. For although it belonge onely to God, to giue sayth, and hee worketh the same in the mindes of men, by the vertue of his holy spirite, for which cause the worshippers of Christ are called by the Prophet, the taught of God, yet for our sakes he witteth safe to vse the outwarde ministerie of the worde, the vse and dignitie whereof must be defended and retayned in the Church. Which thing is the cause, why the Prophetes account fitte teachers, among the chiefe benefites of God, and Christ teacheth his Apostles to praye vnto God, to sende worthy and faithfull workmen into his vineyarde. And Paule in another place sheweth the maiesty, and great care of Christ for his Church, by this one argument, chiefly that he sendeth from high, giftes of his holy spirite, and giueth some Apostles, some Prophetes, some Euaungelists, some Pastors and teachers, to the increase of the Saintes, in the woorke of administration, and to the building vp of his bodye. They ought well to remember this, that take vpon them in these dayes authoritie ouer the Church of Christ, whether they be Bishops or secular Magistrates, that they fayle not in this most necessary poynt, to see to the Church, but that they order euery thing in such sort, that they maye leaue to their posteritie, presidents of sounde and true doctrine. Wher vnto chiefly belongeth the appointing of schooles, and bringing vp of youth, which the Prophetes in the olde

The chiefe
care in the
Church, must
be for fitte
Ministers.
Rom. 10.

1. Cor. 3.

Esaie. 54.

Math. 9.

Ephes. 4.

The small
company of
the Church
primitiue.

The small
number of
beleeuers,
must offend
no man.

Iohn. 3.

Iohn. 7.

Isaye. 53.

Luke. 12.

Luke. 18.

Testament had a great care of, and after that, the Christian Emperours likewise. Which things whosoever either through negligence, or waisting of the Church goodes consume, they ought to be taken for the greatest enemies of the Church, and shall one daye buy such their heynous offences full deere at Christes hande. But to addresse vs to the declaration of this present place Luke with great diligence rehearseth this hystorie, declaring how the chiefe vse thereof is for vs to learne by example of the Apostles, what to obserue and followe in choosing and appoynting ministers of the Church.

He beginneth with the description of the Church that was at that time. In those dayes (sayth he) when they being gathered together with one accorde: looked for the comming of the holy ghost: Peter stood vp in the midst of the Disciples, and proposed a matter which indifferently appertained to them all. The number of them that beleeued, when they were rehearsed by name, was about an hundred and twentie. Here both the small number of beleeuers in the Primitiue Church, and Peter the Apostle, are diligently to be considered.

For touching the number of them that professed Christ, I thinke there is no man, but marueyleth that there was no more founde in so famous and populous a Citie, that professed and followed Christ. For what had Christ left vnassayde in that Citie: For to omit the teaching, aduertisements & exhortation of the Prophets, if a man consider but the things done in that Citie, from the time that Christ came among them, he shall perceyue an incredible hardnesse of heart and frowardnesse in that nation. Iohn the Baptist went before Christ, & by reason of the plainnesse of his doctrine, and straightnesse of his lyfe, had bene able to haue moued anye kinde of men. But howe smally he profited, the pzoofe very well declared. Then by and by vpon, followed Christ, who to his doctrine (which he framed and prepared all maner of wayes to winne them with) added myracles of such force and efficacie, that they were able to make the very enemies to confesse the truth. Verily Nicodemus confessed, that no man but he that was sent of God coulde doe such things as they sawe him doe euery daye. And manye openly sayde: Shall Christ when hee commeth, worke more myracles than this man hath done? I let passe the signes and wonders which partly went before Christes death, and partly followed, which were able to mollifie the hartes of the most cruell souldiers. And yet after all these thinges, there are no more but sixe score persons reckened among all that beleeued, by Lukes testimony, who was a most faithfull and true witnesse. In this appeareth the great power of Iesus Christ, which of this sinall remnant, as the Prophets afore times tolde, was able to multiplie and encrease his Church, that in fewe yeares it was spzed ouer all the worlde. Wee maye learne also the vntowardnesse of mans nature, and acknowledge almost an incurable naughtinesse in him, and not to be offended, though we see but fewe in these dayes that beleeue the doctrine of the Gospell. For this did Esaias long ago fozelee, & therfore minding to preach of the redemption that should be made by Christ, crieth out: who hath beleeued our preaching, & to whom is the arme of the Lorde declared? And Christ speaking to his flocke, sayth: feare not little flocke, for it hath pleased my father to giue you a kingdome. And himselfe speaking of the last times, declareth that such shall be the fashon and condicion of the worlde, when he commeth that he shall finde no faith, or truth vpon

the

the earth.

Therefore great is the errour of those which iudge of faith and doctrine, according to the multitude or fewnesse of them that followe it, which is a common thing nowe a dayes. For such was the state of the Church even in the very beginning, that the smallest number embraced the doctrine of truth. Noah only with his familie in that auncient worlde followed a diuers faith and religion from the residue of the people, all the world besides being fallen to superstition and Idolatrie. But neyther the paucitie of his household was able to bereaue him of saluation, nor the multitude of his aduersaries to condemne him: yea, where al the world beside perished, he was saved, and hath God both to allowe and defend his faith. The same we may say of Loth living among the Sodomites. Besides this, Elias onely setteth himselfe aswell against al the Priests of Baal, as against king Achab, & al his Courtiers, in the quarell of faith and religion. And Micheas alone encountereth with thre hundred false Prophetes, whome the king fauoured and maintayned. Therefore it is meete that we regarde rather the very doctrine of truth, which comning from the mouth of God, is contayned in the holpe Scripture, than the authoritie of men. Forasmuch as all men are lyars, and God alone true in his saying.

It is profitable also to consider what Peter doth, who rising vp amongst the Disciples, proposeth this thing to be entreated of, openly amongst them all. Herehence the Bishops of Rome seeke the defence of their supremacie, or rather tyranny, as also of other places that seeme to attribute any prerogative of superiortie to Peter. They seeme to me to doe as men, which are in daunger, in deepe gulfes and ryuers. For as they vse to catch holde of euery thing that cometh next to their hande: so these men snatch at euery thing, whereby to defende the dignitie of their supremacie, so battered nowe and shaken, that it threatneth the catholyke and vniuersall ruine therof. By this meanes they challenge to Peter the keyes of the kingdome of heauen, which yet were giuen to all the Apostles at once, as is euident to be seene in Iohn the. xx. Chapter. So they contend that the charge of Christs flocke is committed to Peter onely, as to the chiefe, & consider not what iniury they doe to the residue of the Apostles, as though Christ had made them feeders of swyne and Altes, and not of his sheepe. After lyke maner, where they nowe heare howe Peter speaketh first in the congregation, by and by they make him Christs Vicar, the head of the Church and the chiefe of the Apostles. And going farther, they take all this honor to themselves, as to the lawfull and ordinary successors of Peter. But howe bayne and frivoulous these things are, the matter it selfe declareth. For Peter prescribeth nothing of his owne heade, as any ruler of the Church, or Lorde ouer the other Apostles, but being in the midst of the Disciples, as his equals and fellowes, proposeth a matter of great weyght, to be intreated of indifferently amongst them all. In the which treatie, he leaueth to euery man free libertie, according as God should put in their hearts by his spirite to saye or to doe. And that he speaketh first, was done by the speciall instinct of the holy ghost, which by this meanes would make the example of grace that Christ shewed in Peter, being receyued againe into fauour after his foule fall, more euident and manifest. Furthermore, in that the other patiently heare him speake, it is a token of vnanimitie, which Luke before attributed to

Wee must
not iudge of
faith accord-
ing to the
multitude
of followers.

3. Reg. 18.

3. Reg. 22.

Roma. 3.

Against the
despyers of
supremacy, in
the Church.

1. Cor. 14.

Gala. 2.

1. Cor. 3.

Math. 18.

& 20.

Luke. 22.

Iohn. 13.

1. Peter. 5.

The Argu-
ment of Pe-
ters Oration.

Peter puts
teeth offences
away by the
prouidence
of God.

them, and is not done so much for superiorities sake, as for order, with-
out which, nothing in the Church or common weale can continue in safety.
Wherefore Paule commaundeth all things in the Church to be done comely
and in order. As touching the state of the Apostles, he maketh them all fel-
lowes and equals, and where in one place he calleth himselfe the least of the
Apostles, hauing respect to the vnworthynesse of his former lyfe, the same
speaking of the ministry, feareth not to match himselfe with Peter, saying:
He that was mighty in Peter in the Apostleship ouer the Circumcision, the same
was also mighty in me among the Gentyles. And meaning to roote out from
amonge the Corinthians, the sectes of them that helde of Paule, Peter, and
Apollo, he sayth: What is Paule, what is Apollo, but ministers by whom you
haue beleueed, euen as the Lorde gaue euerye man grace? Peter himselfe ac-
knowledgeth the same, who within a little after, speaking of Iudas, witnes-
seth that he had receyued a part in the ecclesiasticall ministry. And if Iudas
had a part therein, what ignorance shall it be, to ascribe and pull the whole
vnto Peter? Unlesse perhaps we will saye that Peter for fauour flattered
the wicked traytour, and woulde transferre to the childe of perdition, that
which belonged onely vnto hymselfe. But whereto vse we so manye
wordes, seeing it is plaine that Iesus Christ, diuers times rebuked with
great seueritie, the ambitious desire of supremacie, that was among his
Apostles. It is knowne what is written of this matter. And Peter ear-
nestly admonisheth the pastors of the Church, to beware that they take vp-
on them no Lordship ouer the Church, which is called Christes patri-
monye and the lot of his enheritance. For whome shall we thinke to be of
such great authoritie, to be worthy to haue rule and dominion ouer that pre-
cious flock, that is redeemed with the bloud of Christ? And if no man must
beare rule ouer the Lordes flocke, lyke as Princes of this world vse to doe,
how much more absurde shall it be for them, which haue but one maner of
charge in feeding the flocke, to arrogate any Lordshippe or rule vnto them-
selues. Therfore what else doe the Bishops of Rome by their so greedy de-
sire of supremacie, but forget the preceptes of Christ, and betraye them-
selues to be nothing lesse, than Peters lawfull and true successors? But let
them passe, and come we to Peters Oration. And that consisteth of two parts.

First, he pulleth that stumbling blocke out of the waye, which myght
trouble the mindes of the more simple and vnlearned sort. For when they
saue that Iesus Christ was betrayed by Iudas, and afterwarde perished
himselfe most miserablye both body and soule: it was an easie matter for
them, eyther to doubt whether Christ knewe all thinges, or else to suspect
all the sort of the Apostles together with their doctrine. Therfore Peter doth
not without a cause aunswere this great inconuenience, in the beginning of
his Oration. On the other side, he exhorteth the Disciples that they will ap-
point some other in Iudas roume, least his falling from the fayth, myght
any thing preiudice Christes institution.

The first part he beginneth with the testimony of holy scripture, wher-
in he plainly vttereth the euerlasting purpose of Gods prouidence: which
is a most strong reason to put away offences, that is, to beleue that no-
thing cometh to passe by chaunce, but by the decree and will of God. Where-
fore he sayth: ye men and brethren, it behooued thys Scripture shoulde be ful-
filled, which the holy ghost spake before by the mouth of Dauid, touching Iudas,

which

which was guide to them that tooke Iesus. The sense of which words, seemeth me to be this: I would not (O brethren) haue any of you to be offended, at the cruell deede of Iudas, and his horrible ende, as though these things happened by hazarde, or that the sonne of God, betrapped by a wicked man, had not bene able to haue escaped his crafts and deceptes: I would not also that any should so take these matters, as though the falshode of so wicked a man should derogate any thing from our order and holy function, which we are in, by Christes appoyntment. For it seemed good vnto God, that these things should so come to passe, whose counsaile and purpose it was, that his beloued sonne shoulde be betrayed by one of his entire Disciples. And he woulde not haue vs ignorant hereof. For it is knowne what is read in the Psalme. 41. which Christ himselfe repeated in his last supper, saying: He that eate breade with me, hath layde great wayte for mee. Nowe I tell you before it come to passe, that when it is done you may beleue that I am he. Wherefore cast your eyes vpon Gods prouidence, reuerence his goodnesse and truth, and let not the thinges offende you, that are done by his determination and iust permission.

Iohn. 13.

Yet let no man so vnderstande these things, as though Peter went about to excuse Iudas heynous offence, and to laye all the faulte thereof in God. For that is not the meaning of the diuine prouidence which gouerneth all thing, that we shoulde make God the Autoz of our sinne, bicause whatsoeuer men doe that is naught, they doe it not to fulfill Gods purpose, but to satisfie the cogitations and desires of their owne wicked will. It is playne in deede that it was Gods determination, that his sonne Iesus Christ shoulde be betrayed, through the craft of his Disciple, and should come into the hands of his enemies, and being condemned to death, should be nayled to the crosse where he shoulde purge the sinne of the worlde by the Sacrifice of hys bodye. But if a man consider Iudas, the worker of this treason, he in so mischieuous a deede, had nothing lesse before his eyes than Gods purpose, and the redemption of mankind, but being blinded and wounded with couetousnesse, first polluteth himselfe with theft (as Iohn sayth) & afterward with treason. The same reason is to be made of Annas, Cayphas, Pylate, & all those other whom the Gospell testifieth to haue bene seekers & executioners of Christs death. The booke of the holy Scripture are full of examples of the lyke kynde, whereby we are aduertised howe grievously men sinne, in committing those things which God in deede will haue done, but yet they doe them, being moued thereto through y^e blinde and inordinate affections of corrupt nature. I praye you who is so dull headed to thinke that Ioseph came into Egypt without the speciall counsell of Gods prouidence, whereas we reade that God aduertised Abraham himselfe long before, of the going downe of his posteritie into Egypt: who lykewise acknowledgeth not the marueylous wisdom of God in all this businesse, which gouerneth al things most prudently and profitably: Shall we therefore excuse Iosephs brethren, which being moued with enuye, solde awaye their brother, that deserued better of them: yea, we will expounde all thys businesse by Iosephes owne wordes: yee thought euill agaynst me, but God turned it to good, to bring to passe as it is this daye, and to saue much people alyue. Yea, we haue dayly experience of lyke occurrences and examples. For who will saye the theefe killeth the wayfaring man, without the prouidence

The prouidence of God excuseth no sinner.

Iohn. 12.

Gene. 50.

of

Plalme. 90.
Math. 10.

Of what
force, pray-
ers bee.

Iacob. 1.

We must ap-
point nothing
in the Church,
without scrip-
ture.

Deuter. 17.

Ezech. 3. 33.

Luke. 4.

The holpe
Ghost, the
Auctour of
scripture.
1. Peter. 1.
2. Peter. 1.

of God, considering we knowe that the dayes of our life, and the heares of our heade are numbred before God? But bicause the murtherer committeth such an heynous offence, being moued with wicked affection, therfore is he in all the fault, and shal iustly be punished for the same. Let no man therfore seeke excuse for his wickednesse in Gods prouidence, nor make God the Auctor of his sinne, but by the consideration hereof, let vs seeke comfort whereby to arme and strengthen our selues, against the horrible chaunces of this life. And that Peter had a respect hereto, it is euident, by hys words, wherein followe other things to be considered.

And first, we are taught by a notable example, of what efficacye and strength godlye prayers be. For Luke shewed vs aboue, that the Apostles continued with one consent in prayers, wherby what was brought to passe, is now perceyued. For Peter, which a little before was ignorant of the right maner of Christes kingdome, and among the rest had put forth a foolish question, touching the very time of restoring the same: by and by beginneth to preach of the Scriptures which he alledgeth most aptly, and expoundeth most sincerely. So true it is that the Apostle sayth: If any of you lacke wisdom, let him aske of him that giueth, that is of God, and it shall be giuen him.

Further, we are taught by the example of Peter, that nothing ought to be appointed in the Church, without the authoritie of the Scripture. For as in well ordred common weales, there are certaine lawes, yea, rather an authentike Code of lawes, from the which, no man of his owne heade, hath authoritie to take any thing, or to put to any thing, or else to appoynt any thing in the common weale, beside the prescript thereof: euen so Christ hath deliuered to his Church the booke of the olde and new Testament, wherein are contayned the mysteries of the kingdome of heauen, and the lawes of eternall lyfe. Therefore out of them must be taken all counsell, and the Argumentes of all the sermons that are to be made in the congregation. Neyther is there any man of such roume and ordering, that must thinke he hath power, to ordayne or appoynt any thing, contrarye to the same. This booke in the beginning was deliuered to the Kings, not to thend they should thinke they had iurisdiction ouer the same, but for that they should drawe forth of the same good lawes, whereby to rule the people well. And the Prophets were bounde by this commaundement, to take their sermons from Gods mouth. Which thing we can interprete to be none other but the Scriptures, bicause by these, as by a certaine mouth, God reuealeth vnto vs the mysteries of his will. And Christ himselfe oftentimes preacheth forth of the scriptures, and disdayneth not to turne the holpe booke, and to expounde certaine places of them vnto the people. An example wherof, he shewed in the schoole at Nazareth. Therefore Peter following the example of his mayster, taketh the beginning of his sermon out of the Scriptures, whome woulde God they woulde imitate, which highly glorying, in the succession of Peter, dare yet thrust into the Church, diuers thinges repugnaunt to the Scriptures, onely vpon mans authoritie.

Furthermore, Peter adourneth the scriptures with an excellent praye, where he sayth, the holy ghost is Auctor of them, which woulde vtter these thinges by the mouth of Dauid. The same he confesseth in another place, where he sayth, that the Prophets were inspired with the spirite of Christ, and prophesied by the instinct of the same spirite. And Paule meaneth the

same,

same, where he sayth, the Scripture is inspired of God. The blessing of these places be, that we acknowledging the dignitie and authoritie of the Scriptures, might take whatsoever is sayde in the same to be the worde of God, and that we should not thinke it lawfull for vs by any meanes, to gaine say his commaundementes.

The Apostle goeth forth with the first part of his Oration, and declareth diligently the dignitie of Iudas, which he had as well as the other Apostles, before he fell. For he sayth: which was numbred with vs, and had obtained fellowship in this ministration. For some man might thinke Iudas was in deede accounted amongst the Apostles, but for none other cause but to make up the number, being otherwise a bayne man & of no estimation. But Peter answereth this obiection, saying, he was not onely of the number of the Apostles, but had obtained fellowship in the administration. The Evangelists beare witness of the same, accounting him with them which Christ sent forth to preach while he was here on earth, and which had power given them to worke myracles, & which returned to Christ, and told him the good successe they had in the time of their Ambassage. And so little is Iudas separated from the number of them in any place, that euen then the Evangelists saye he was of their number, when they tell of that heynous deede which he committed in betraying of Christ.

And what shall we saye is the cause, that so often mention is made of this matter both before, and is now agayne by Peter repeated: Would the holy ghost either flatter wicked Iudas, or stayne the order of the Apostles with this blot: No. Yea, he teacheth vs another thing both most worthy and necessary to be marked, that is, that we should take no offence at the faults of excellent men, and that because of their falles we should not rashly condemn all other of their vocation, which manye be foolishlye to doe in the faultes of those of the ministerie. For, when they see some great fall in such as before they wondred at, by reason of their sincere doctrine, ioynd with wisdom and constancie, not contented to be offended at their byres only, they open their mouth against the whole order of the ministerie, crying out that they are all dissemblers, and knaues: and goyng yet farther, feare not to call their doctrine in question and doubt. Therefore Jesus Christ foresawing that the ministers of his worde were men, and myght sometymes greuously fall, by reason of humane fragilitie, least any man being offended at their byres, shoulde utterlye condemne the doctrine of the Gospel, he would forwarne them by certaine faults of the Apostles, & chiefly by y horrible fall of Iudas. For if the Apostles had bene cleere of all faults, we shoulde not without a cause in these dayes doubt of their doctrine, whom we see oftentimes greuously to fal. But forasmuch as neyther the crime of ambition, which Christ many times reprehended in them, nor the fowle fall of Peter denying his mayster, nor the heynous offence of Iudas betraying him, derogateth any whit from the doctrine of the Gospel: hee is surely verie foolish, which is so offended at the vices of the ministers, that for the vices sake, he will accuse the doctrine of truth, of falshood. Yea, there is no vocation of men, but hath both good and badde in it. And if nothing were wanting in the order of the Apostles by Iudas fall (for it is supplied by Matthias succeeding) how much lesse by his fall shall any thing be derogated from the Apostles doctrine. Neyther saye I this, for that I woulde

open

2. Timo. 3.

The dignitie
that Iudas
had at the
first.

Math. 10.

Marke. 3.

Luk. 6. 9.

&c.

Mark. 14.

We must not
be offended at
the faultes, of
the ministers
of the worde.

Math. 23.

The faithfull
are betrayed
by them of
their owne
householde.

Psal. 55. 41.

&c.

Math. 10.

The horrible
end of Judas

open any gappe to Ministers to lyue ever the more lycentiously. For we knowe that the greater their offence is, the more grievous shall their punishment be. But we giue counsell to the weake, that they throwe not awaye the wholesome doctrine of the truth to their great daunger, with the naughty life of the Ministers, wherof Christ gaue vs a warning, speaking of the Jewish Scribes in this wise. The Scribes and Phariseys sit in the chayre of Moses. All thinges therfore that they commaunde you to obserue, that obserue and doe: but doe not ye after their workes, for they say and doe not.

Moreouer, the consideration of these things put awaye an other stumbling block. For this is the common case of the faithfull of Christ, and of all the Church, to be most in daunger of their owne acquaintance. Godlye Abell was slaine by his owne brother of father and mother. Ioseph was sold by his owne brethren. And Moses findeth his brethren the Israelites, (for whose sake he forsooke the riches & pleasures of Egypt,) more unkind almost than the Egyptians. Dauid also complayneth most of their lying in waite, which sometymes were of his most familiarest friendes. And we daylye finde that saying of Christ true: A mans enemies be they of his owne house. And these thinges offende many a man, being griued that their owne friendes mindes be estranged from them, and then begin they wrongfully to deny many thinges of the doctrine by them preached, supposing it to be the chiefe cause of such discention and diuision. To speake nothing in the meane season of them, which thinke the condicions of the godlye, to be so harde and sharpe that a man cannot long continue friendship with them. And this one example aunswereth all these men, where we are taught howe the sonne of God, the singular patterne of all myldenesse and humilitie, was betrayed of his owne familiar and domesticall Disciple. Why therfore shall we promyse our selues anye thing of mans propertie and condicion? Or shall we thinke it vnmete to be in the same state, that the sonne of God was in for our sake?

But let vs returne to Peter, who as he hath set forth the former Dignity that Iudas had, and his heynous offence: so he liuely paynteth out his horrible ende, and as it were, setteth it before our eyes to looke vpon and beholde, not thereby to satisfie his minde, as one burning in hatred with the remembraunce of so wretched a man, but for that he woulde kindle in all mens mindes a certaine feare of God, and a desire of true godlynesse, by making mention of so horrible an example. And it was to a good purpose to make mention hereof, seeing they consulted about choosing a newe Apostle: to thende they shoulde be brought to a diligent consideration of their office, and to a feruent desire of accomplishing the same. Therfore he sayth: And he truly possessed a plot of grounde with the rewarde of iniquitie, and when he was hanged, burst a sunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it is knowne vnto all the inhabiteurs of Hierusalem: in so much that the same felde is called in their mother tongue, Acheldama, that is to saye, the bloody felde. It behooueth to consider all these thinges in such order as they fell out. For as the Euangelistes write, when Iudas saue Christ deliuered vnto Py-late, being stricken with repentaunce of his wicked fact, he returneth to the Priests, confelleth his offence, and rendreth back the money which was the rewarde of his wicked treason. But being mocked of them disdainefullye, and reiected, he hurleth the money downe in the temple, and getting him

from

from thence, throtleth himselfe with an halter. The Priestes bicause they coulde nerther with honestye, let the money lye scattered in the Church, nor durst put it among the treasure of the Church, knowing it to be the pryce of bloude, they buye with it a Dotters fiede to burie straungers in, hereby meaning cleane to wyipe out the wickednesse, whereof they were not long before authors. Howbeit, by this meanes they purchase to themselves, the perpetuall shame of so wicked an acte, whyle by Gods prouidence it cometh to passe, that the fiede called after the name of the money, that was the pryce of bloud, beareth perpetuall witnesse of their wicked offence. This fiede Peter sayth, Iudas himselfe tooke possession of, both bicause it was bought with his money, and for that the greatest part of so slaunderous a memory belonged vnto Iudas. Furthermore, in these things let vs marke first in Iudas, the sorrowes of a boyling conscience, which is playne, were most cruell and more intollerable than the paynes of hell, bicause they were able not only to make him set naught by his money, but also being otherwise a most couetous captiue, made him hate the same, and brought him to the confession of his fault, which Christ at his supper aduertised him of in baine, and made him weary of this present life. Adde herevnto his horrible kind of death. He knitteth the halter about his owne necke: he is his owne hangman, and dispatcheth himselfe out of life. And for a more aggrauation of his cruell death, he brast a sunder in the midst, and all his intralles gushed out. For he well deserued to haue his intralles poured forth, which feared not to sell Christ the onely Autor of true lyfe for filthye lucre. And yet the rigor of Gods iudgement here ended not, but the remembrance of so heynous an offence endureth for euer. So it cometh to passe that the vnhappy childe of perdition nerther enioyeth his lyfe long, nor yet the money which he helde dearer than his lyfe. Let them set the eyes of their minde vpon this glasse, whosoener vse for filthye lucre sake, and for priuate gaine to betraye Christ, to denye the truth, and shamefully to mocke the Church of Christ. Let whosoener lyueth by bloude, well weye these things, and such as thinke it a most worthy commendation, to be enriched by wages for their warring, and testifie their welth by gorgeous building, by trimming their farmes, by costly householde stuffe, by braue apparell, and sumptuousnesse in all their doings. For what doe these else, but openly betraye themselves to be bloudthirsty, and leaue after them the monuments of a lyfe led in cruelty: But whereas some poyntes pertaining to this matter, remaine to be spoken in the things that follooe. Let the vnhappy ende of Iudas, warne vs to mortifie & slaughter our sinnes with the sincere feare of God, that we may embrace Iesus Christ with sure sayth: to whome be blessing, honour, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The eyght Homelie.

FOR, it is written in the booke of Psalmes: His habitation be voyde, & no man be dwelling therein. And his Byshopricke let another take. Wherefore of these men, which haue companied with vs all the time that the Lord Iesus, had all his conuersation among vs, beginning at the baptisme of Iohn, vnto that same day that he was taken vp from vs, must one be ordayned to be a witnesse with vs of his resurrection.



Because our Lorde and Sauour Iesus Christ, would haue his Apostles witnesses of our redemption, which he hath purchased vnto vs by his merite: it shal not be superfluous to consider the more diligently, the things that are sayde of their calling & ordering. For except we well knowe these things, their authoritie shal be of no such weyght with vs, as it ought to be. Which thing, is the chiefe cause that their vocation, whom Iesus Christ chose while he was here on earth, is written with such diligence by the Apostles, that no man can doubt but they were ordayned by God. But bicause the authoritie of Matthee shoulde not seeme the lesse, which after Christes ascension succeeded in the place of Iudas, & was numbred with the Colledge of the Apostles: Luke therfore so describeth his election, that it may appeare he was no lesse appoynted to the administration of this office, by Christ, than y other Apostles. For he neither ran of his owne head, nor Peter which propounded this matter to the congregation to be consulted of, doth any thing of his private authoritie, but falling to prayer with the residue of the Church, leaueth al the matter to the ordering of God, as in the next Homely shal be declared. By which example wee learne that Ministers must wayte till they be lawfully called, neyther that anye man must be permitted, eyther to thrust himselfe or any other, into the Ministry ouer hastily and vnauidedly. For in the Prophete, they are grieuously reprehended which runne of their owne heade, not being lawfully called of the Lorde. And Paule sayth: How shall they preach except they be sent? Yet Paule was not ignorant that there were many that preached, not sent of the Lord, whom in some place hee calleth false brethren, which crept in being not lawfully ordayned, but he affirmeth that such can not discharge their office duely: yea, Christ himselfe tooke not vppon him the office of teaching, before he was solemnely declared by God the Father, to be the teacher of all the worlde, whereof the Autor of the Epistle to the Hebrewes maketh mention. Which order, if it be not obserued, neyther can the people take them for Gods Ministers, of whose calling they are vncertaine, neyther can the Ministers vse themselves in their office with such credite and constancye as becommeth them. For with what weapons shal they arme themselves against the threats of the worlde, the attemptes of tyrants, & perils on euery side, which knowing in their conscience how vniustlye they haue vsurped, can conceyue in their mindes no hope of Gods ayde or assistance?

But let vs returne to Peter, who in the beginning of his Oration, as wee sayde yester day, taketh away the offence, that might ryle of Iudas fall, by referring or sending them to y decre of Gods prouidence, which the holy ghost many yeres past (& gone) reuealed to vs by Dauid. And bicause he had made mention of the holy scripture, now he bringeth forth certaine testimonies of the same. And omitting the testimonies wherein Iudas transgression (which before was sufficiently declared) was prophesied, he rehearseth onely those that are extant of his horrible punishment. And he ioyneth two testimonies together, wherof the first is taken out of Ier. Psalme, & the other out of the Cii. Psalme. It is written (sayth he) in the booke of Psalmes: let his habitation be voyde, and no man dwelling therein, and let another take his Bishoprick.

And

Let Ministers wayte
till they be
orderly called.

Hiere. 23.

Roma. 10.

Galat. 2.

Hebrues. 5.

Prophecies
of Iudas punishment.

And it maketh no matter that in all those Psalmes Dauid speaketh of his enimies. For where in the persecution which he suffered vnder Saule the tyrant, he bare the figure of Iesu Christ: whatsoeuer thinges are spoken of his enimies, are to be referred to Christes enimies, and specially to Iudas, which was as it were of all other the standarde bearer.

But before we speake of his punishmentes, this is not to be passed ouer, that the holy ghost woulde not onely prophetic of the treason that Iudas committed, but also of his horrible punishment. For where Iudas betrayed Christ, being prouoked with couetousnesse, & not for that he would further the redemption of mankind, according to Gods ordinaunce, his transgression can be excused by no meanes, but deserueth grievous punishmentes. And this is the trade of all the wicked, which if we obserue, it shall easily appeare, that Gods prouidence defendeth them not, nor that our sinnes ought to be layde to Gods charge: forasmuch as men sinne of their owne voluntary accorde, who vnlesse they be bozne agayne, of the effectuall power of Gods spirite and grace, can of themselues doe nothing else but sinne. Yet bicause it is euident that all thinges are ordred by his prouidence, sinnes may not be exempt or taken from his gouernance, vnlesse we will denye the omnipotencie of God, and attribute vnto man, power to doe any thing against the will of God. The prouidence of God stayeth not in the sinne of man, but going further, prescribeth due paynes for sinnes, and appointeth diuers executours of the same paynes, according to his owne pleasure. Therefore let vs acknowledge God for no autoz of our sinnes, but rather an aduenger, and by the consideration of his prouidence, we shall by and by perceyue, that all his iudgements are righteousnesse and truth.

But let vs see the paynes, wherewith God in times passed both punished Iudas treason, and also vseth to reuenge the wickednesse of all his enimies. These are both manie and sundrye, whereof Dauid maketh large mention in the places aboue rehearsed. But Peter in this place is contented with two, which are both euidently perceyued in Iudas, and comprehend in them almost all other. The first is exprest in these wordes: Let his habitation be voyde, and no man dwelling therein. Here he threatneth them with destruction, and that they shall be driuen out of their owne houses and dwellings. These thinges seeme to agree with that curse of Moses: Thou shalt builde an house, and another shall dwell therein. For where he sayth: Let no man be dwelling therein: it appeareth it is to be vnderstanded of the posteritie of the wicked, which deserue with their fathers to be driuen out of their dwellings, and to be scattered abroad. And this is a most grievous punishment, if a man well weygh it. For it comprehendeth all the aduersitie, that a man can suffer eyther in body or goodes. For warre, and whatsoeuer mischaunces warre bringeth with it, goeth before destruction. After that cometh pouertie, famine, labour, care, thought, shame, and a continuall entercourse of calamities, which is not finished, but with consumption and pining awaye, and many times leaueth behinde it a shamefull memozye of wickednesse. All which thinges, no man can doubt but happened to Iudas. For although it may seeme he escaped the long and tedious calamities of this life, by speedy hanging of himselfe: yet his posterity could not escape the iudgement of God. And what calamitie they suffered, may easily be gathered by the vniuersall destruction of the Iewishe nation. For Iudas alone is

The prouidence of God doth not warrant wickednesse.

The punishmentes of Christes enimies.

Destruction.

Deuter. 28.

And Iudas was consumed.

Math. 27.

Math. 23.

Math. 24.

Luke. 19.

Rome many
times spoiled
and ryled.

Rome taken
seauen times
within 139.
yeares.

No dignitie,
or other pre-
eminence ca

not in all the blame, that Christ was betrayed and crucified, but the whole Nation also with him, the chiefe heades wherof, hyred Iudas to take so wicked an enterpryse in hand, and with their whole consent allowed the counsell of those heades before Pylate the President, crying: Crucifie him, crucifie him, his bloude be vpon vs and vpon our children. And the iustice of God ceased not long, but required the innocent bloude of his sonne at their handes. And that that Christ many tymes threatened them, not long after came to passe. For Christ thus threatned them. Hierusalem, Hierusalem, which killest the Prophetes, and stonest them that are sent vnto thee. Howe oft woulde I haue gathered thy children togyther, as the Henne gathereth hir chickens, and thou wouldest not? Beholde thy house is left vnto thee desolate. And againe: There shall not be left here one stone standing vpon another, which shall not be destroyed. In another place also he declareth, & that with teares, the destruction of the vnhappy Citie, saying: The dayes shall come vpon thee, that thyne enemies shall cast a banke about thee, and compasse thee rounde, and keepe thee in on euery side, and make thee euen with the ground, and thy children which are in thee, and they shall not leaue in thee one stone vpon another, bycause thou hast not knowne the time of thy visitation. If a man would compare the historie and state of the Jewes at this day, being scattered ouer all the world, with these sayings: he should see those things most truely fulfilled, which the Lorde before prophesied. The same iudgement of God felt the Citie of Rome lykewise in times passed. For where after the subuersion of the Jewes, she drewe the sword against the Church of Christ, & all to embzued hir selfe with the bloude of the Saintes. God at length required hir. For within an hundred thirty and nine yeres space, she was taken seuen times, and came into the hands of barbarous nations. First the Visigothes, hauing Marychus to their Captaine, toke the Citie and ryled it, the yere of our Lorde, foure hundred and twelue. Then foure and fourty yeres after, the Vandali, vnder the conduct of Genferichus toke hir, and in the ryling of hir, spared no kinde of outrage that the most couetous enemye vseth in the spolie of a Citie. After them, followed a people called Heruli, which hauing one Odacre to their generall, entred and toke hir, the yere of our Lorde. CCCC. lxxi. At which thing, Theodoricus king of the Easterne Gothes, hauing indignation, toke hir likewise. And when Bellisarius about a fiftie yeres after, had recovered hir againe, within twelue yeres after that, Totylas an Easterne Gothe got hir by treason, spoyled and set fire on hir, disarmed hir of hir holdes, and rased euen to the ground, more than the thirde part of hir, and set fire on the Capitole, with many other publyke and priuate buildings. And so returning from Rome, suffered not one man or woman to remaine alyue in hir, insomuche that the same Citie, which was sometimes, Lady Maystresse of the worlde, was left cleane destitute of anye man dwelling in hir. And although Bellisarius, the yere following repayed the same againe: yet being called backe to Byzantium, he was faine to leaue the Citie to Totylas to be taken and sacked againe. Infinite examples of this sort myght be shewed, which testifie, that most certaine destruction hangeth ouer the heades of the enemies of Christ and his Church.

The other kinde of punishment is: And his Byshoprick let another take. By the which wordes he declareth that such kinde of men by no maner dignities, or other excellent priuiledges that they enioy, can escape the immi-

nent

nent iudgement of God. For whatsoeuer excellent and singular gifts they
 haue obtayned through the goodnesse of God, bee taken from them and gy-
 uen vnto other: as Iudas hereof is a most manifest example: He was cal-
 led to be an Apostle, and therewithall was (as it had bene) the stewarde
 of Christ. Therefore great was his dignitie, and such as passed the dignity
 both of king & Emperour. Herevnto is to be added his continuall conuer-
 sation with Christ, and that he sawe and hearde many things with the other
 Apostles, which many Prophets and righteous men (although they great-
 ly desired the same) coulde neyther see nor heare. But all these coulde not
 helpe this vnhappy body, which deserued through his falschoode to be bere-
 ued of them all. For he departeth this world with an horrible ende, and the
 dignitie of his Apostleship is cast vpon Matthie. The like iudgement of God
 is seene in Saule, who was so bolde as to persecute Dauid, bearing a figure
 of Christ. For as soone as he had once purposed that thing in his minde,
 the good spirite of God was taken from hym, & the euill spirite of Sathan
 entred in his place, wherewith he was continually haunted, vntill that both
 he killed himselfe, & left the kingdome to Dauid, to possesse. Hereto is the sen-
 tence of Christ to be applyed: To euery one that hath, shall be giuen, and from
 him that hath not, shall be taken euen that he hath. For, they by Christs iudge-
 ment are sayde to haue, which being indued with the giftes of God, acknow-
 ledge them in themselves, and vse them with all their power, to the glozie of
 God, and the saluation of many. And God of his liberalitie and bountie in-
 creaseth his gifts euery daye in them, and maketh them more and more to
 appeare. But they which neglect them, as though they had receyued none
 at Gods hande, and applying their owne businesse, haue no regarde to that
 that appertayneth to the glozye of God, they are at length so punished for
 their negligence and contempt, that they are deprived of all their graces,
 they become infortunat, despised, and bitterlie shamed. For that sen-
 tence shall remayne for euer, neither shall it be broken with any force of the
 worlde, which God speaketh among other things to Hely the Priest, in his
 wrath, shewing him how he shoulde be punished: I will honour those that
 honour mee, and they that despyse mee, shall come to shame. And in another
 place he threateneth extreme ignominie and shame to the wicked, which re-
 garde not the glozye of God: I will (sayth hee) sende a curse vpon you: and
 will curse your bleisings: yea, curse them will I, if you doe not take heede. Be-
 holde, I shall corrupt your seede, and cast dunge in your faces, euen the dunge
 of your solemne feastes. I would we did often consider these things in these
 dayes, and then would we not marueyle how all they haue lost their autho-
 ritie and estimation in the Church & common weale, which ought to be re-
 uerenced. The Bishops complayne of this misfortune, & can not tell where
 the authoritie of the Church is become. But they should cease to complayne
 and marueyle, if they would remember the counterfeyting of true doctrine,
 their buying and selling of holpe thinges, the corruption of maners, the co-
 uetousnesse, and pryde, & many such other lyke, brought into the Church by
 their meanes, whereby they haue abundantly declared themselves to bee
 rather the successors of Iudas, than of Peter. The teachers of the Gospell also
 complayne of the contempt of their office and ministry, saying, that the au-
 thoritie of ecclesiasticall disciplyne, is vtterly extinguished. And it is no mar-
 uyle, considering that in their number also, a man maye see verie manye

de pruer vs
 from Gods
 iudgement.

Math. 25.

1. Samuel. 2.

Deuter. 28.

Malach. 2.

of

of small habilitie to set forth Gods glorie, and other some, vnder the fayre colour of Euangelike doctrine, giuen to couetousnesse, fraunching and feeding, to pamper their bodies, and to satisfie their lust. Therefore the dignitie and authoritie due to the Ministry, is of right taken from them. Whosoever therefore will keepe and maintaine, the degree and authoritie wherin God hath set him, let him principally haue a care to set forth the glorie of God, let him bryge that, and, in despyte of the world study with all his power to aduance the same, and not swarue one nayles bredth from his vocation and dutie.

Peter exhorteth to appoint another in Judas rounge.

Nowe let vs come to the other part of Peters Oration, wherewith he exhorteth the congregation to chosse another in the rounge of Judas. Where he deduceth his arguments aptly out of the Oracles of the Scripture afore sayd. For he seemeth thus to say: bicause the holy ghost (long time since) prophesied that Judas should betraye Christ, and after his horrible ende of life, should leaue his Bishopricke and Apostleshippe to another: we must seeke one to succede him out of the number of them, which haue continued with vs, and haue seene all the thinges, that Christ did whyle he was here on earth. And Peters argument is very worthy to be considered: which being made in fewe wordes, is this in effect: Another must haue Judas Bishopricke according to the Oracle of the holy ghost: Ergo, it is our partes to prouide a worthy and meete successor in his place. And at the first sight this seemeth to be an absurde consequence. For, be it that another must haue Judas Bishopricke, shall it therefore follow that the Apostles and they that were gathered with them, must chosse him, that should haue his Bishopricke: But all this countenance of absurditie quickly banisheth away, if we consider the office that the Apostles sustayne by reason of Christes office. For Christ being readye to leaue the worlde, commended the cure of his Church to them, and they were of the number of them, which should giue meate to the Lordes family, as we reade Math. 24. Therefore, where it is chiefly requisite for conseruation of the Church, that there be worthy and fit Ministers appoynted: Peter not without a cause, gathereth, that it appertayned to them to ordayne a newe Apostle, bicause there was a manifest Oracle of the holy ghost apparaunt, touching the placing of another in Judas rounge.

Math. 24.

Howe wee should reade & scriptures.
Roma. 15.
2. Timo. 3.

We are taught by Peters example, howe we should be occupied in reading of holy Scripture. For here must we alwayes haue our vocation before our eyes, that whatsoeuer belongeth thereto we should thinke spoken to vs. For the Scriptures are giuen of God for our learning, as Paule witnesseth. Therefore great is their error, which reade the holy bookes with no more heede, than if they were prophane wyrters, hauing their mindes as they read, occupied with other cogitations, as though the reading of scripture, were appoynted but for delyte, or to passe the time away. Let vs therefore well marke, what commaundementes and examples belong to our vocation, that we maye continue in the same, and declare our industrie towarde God. For in thus doing, a minister of the worde shall thinke, whatsoeuer thinges are spoken by the Prophetes or Apostles, touching the administration of the same worde, to be sayde vnto him. And they that be Magistrates, let them thinke whatsoeuer is sayde in the Scriptures, touching the dutie of Officers, with examples of auncient Magistrates, whether they be good or badde, to be spoken vnto them. The same shall priuate men also

also doe, of what state or condicion so euer they be. So shall it come to passe that with a certayne godly delight and pleasure of minde, they shall receyue incredible profite by reading of the Scriptures.

Let vs examine the wordes of Peter, wherein two things most appertayning to this present purpose, are handled. First, he teacheth what maner of person should be chosen to the roume of an Apostle. Then he defineth the office or dutie of an Apostle. And of these two he so disputeth, that they may serue to the institution of all Ministers, of the word, & of the congregation.

To the first part appertayneth this saying: Wherefore of these men which haue companied with vs, all the time that the Lorde IESVS had all his conuersation among vs, beginning at the baptisme of Iohn, vntill that same day that he was taken vp from vs, must one be ordayned. &c. Peter requireth here two things of great weyght. The first is a sure and sounde knowledg of Iesus Christ, and of all the things he did, whyle he was amongst his Disciples. For vsing an Hebrewe phrase by two contraries, that is to saye, of going in, and coming out, he includeth all things that euer Christ did. Yet least any man should take occasion hereof, ouer curiouslye to inquire after euery thing, he compasseth this knowledg within certaine boundes, that is to saye, the baptisme of Iohn, and the glorious ascension of Christ into heauen. For before Christ was baptised of Iohn, he led a priuate life in Nazareth of Galiley, behauing himselfe obediently to his Parents, and exercising the Carpenters craft, as maye be gathered. But the thinges that concerned our redemption, and belonged to the office of the Melsias, he then went aboute when hee had bene baptised of Iohn, and was authorized by the visibill annoynting of the holy Ghost, and by the testimonye of the father which was hearde from heauen. For which cause, the Euangelists contented with the describing of his incarnation, touching his nonage and childheode, haue written very little. For the holy ghost ment hereby to bzidle the foolish curiositie of mans wit, which not many yeares ago vttered and set forth it selfe by no simple writers I warrant you: who haue compelled vs the lyfe and whole chyldehode of Christ, to the great mockery & open scorne of the Christian profession. Howbeit, Peter thinketh the knowledg of these thinges sufficient and inough which Christ did, after he was so solemnlye admitted and put in office. And this knowledg was necessary, bicause Christ ordayned his Apostles to be faithfull witnesses of his doings. Secondly, he requireth a certaine and euident signe of perseuerance and continuance. For he woulde haue none chosen out of that number, which were yet but nouices and newly entred into Christes religion, but such as began to folloow Christ, from the beginning of his conuersation amongst men, and so continued with him, being neyther feared with daunger of persecution, nor offended with the crosse and his shaunderous death. And these thinges should now a dayes be obserued, in choosing & ordering of Ministers, if they had any care of the Church, which challenge greatest authoritie ouer y same. For it is playne that the chiefe dutie of the Minister standeth in teaching, as God sayth by the Prophete: In the Priestes lippes should be the sure knowledg, that men may seeke the lawe at his mouth. For hee is the messenger of the Lorde of hostes. But how shall he teach who is vnlearned and rude himselfe? Surely, Paule in a Bishop requireth this thing chieflie, that he be able to teach, and that not only the playne doctrine of truth, to the more trac-

table

What maner
of men should
be chosen into
the ministry.

Luke. 2.
Mark. 6.

Math. 3.

Malach. 2.

1. Timo. 3.
Titus. 1.

table sort of men, but also that he be able to refell and conuince such as shall gaine say and contrary the same, whereof there is alwayes a great multitude. Therefore in a Minister of the worde, the knowledge of Christ and his misteries is necessary, with al the things that concerne the articles of the Christian fayth, and the dutie of the faythfull. There is required of him diligent reading of the Scripture, wherein hee ought to be well exercised. He hath neede of the knowledge of the tongues, that in reading the Scriptures he depende not vpon the sense of others, and be constraind to looke with other mens eyes, and to go with other mens fete. Furthermore, it is meete he be furnished with the Artes of speaking, that hee maye perceyue what to propounde, in what place, and after what sort and order. All which, are of such weyght, that Paule not without a cause exhorted Timothy, to continue on still in reading, who yet he confesseth if a childe had learned the Scriptures. Moreover, whereas infinite daungers hange ouer the function of Ministers, boldenesse of minde is requisite, least being overcome with feare of perill, hee drawe backe or sticke in the midst of his course. But this shall chiefly be perceyued by perseuerance or continuance, whereof no doubt he had giuen manifest tokens. The same hath Paule obserued likewise, where he sheweth vs that a Byshop shoulde not be a yong scholar or novice, least being puffed vp with sodaine dignitie, he commit some thing dishonest or vncomely, and giue occasion to the aduersary to reprove him. Yea, and Christ himselfe at his last supper commendeth his Apostles, whom it is plaine, were subiect to many faultes and infirmities, chiefly for this cause, that they abode with him in all his temptations.

1. Timo. 3.

Luke. 22.

The office of
Apostles and
Ministers of
the worde.

But let vs see Peters last wordes, where he defineth the office & dutie of an Apostle. Let one be appoynted (sayth he) which may be a witnesse of his resurrection. First, he will haue a partner or fellow ioynd with the eleuen, not a seruant whome the reast at their pleasure might commaunde. For he knewe that equalitie was needefull to be amongst Christs Ministers. Then he calleth him a witnesse, which name Christ called them by a little before he went from hence. And the often repeticion and diligent consideration of this name, is not a little profitable. For hereby, the worthynesse of the Christian fayth, and certaintye of the doctrine euangelicall may be perceyued, bicause Christ had not onely preachers of the things he did, but also sworne witnesses, which wrote and deliuered to vs the fayth in him. Last of all, he sheweth whereof hee shoulde beare witnesse: namely, of his resurrection. Which is not so to be vnderstanded, as though the Apostles should preach of nothing else but Christs resurrection, but he thought hereby to expresse the chiefe article, wherin al the other be contayned: yea, which plainly teacheth whereto all the other are to be referred. For verily the preaching of his death, is of necessitie included and ioynd to the resurrection. For how shall he teach that Christ is risen from death, which first teacheth not that he died. But if any man will teach that Christ dyed, he must first speake of that nature of Christ, in the which he was able to dye. He must teach therefore that the sonne of God, which is of one everlastingnesse & substance with the father, at what tyme appoynted, tooke mans nature in the birging wombe, in the which, after many and diuers troubles of this life, at length he suffred bitter death vpon the aultar of the Crosse. Therefore he that will be a preacher and witnesse of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, must omitte none of the things

things that went before the same. But there is another cause also, why Peter would make mention of the resurrection. For this is the ende & accomplishment of our redemption, as Paule sheweth at large in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the .xv. Chapter. For sinne is the sting & power of death, wherunto all men were subiect. But that death is overcome and banquished, the resurrection of Christ doth manifestly declare. Wherefore sinne also, by meanes whereof death had power ouer vs, by the merite of the same Christ, must needes be taken away. And if the guylt of sinne be taken away, & death spoyled and vnarmed, then who saeth not how the Serpents heade is all to crushed, and the tyranny of the Deuill utterly subdued? In dedde he rageth yet, and maketh an horrible adme, but Christian mindes are not afraide of his terrozs. For how shoulde he be able to hurt vs, who hauing the darter of sinne and death taken from him, is all naked and of no force? But this Christ hath taken away, while he purged the sinnes of the worlde, vpon the aultare of the Crosse, and by his glorious resurrection hath killed the force of death. Therefore, syth Peter will haue hon, which must be taken into the number of the Apostles, it be a witnesse of Christes resurrection, he appoynteth him the same office that the residue had, to whome it was sayde: Go yee into all the worlde, and preache the kingdome of God vnto all creatures. Whosoeuer beleeueth and is baptized, shall bee saued. In the meane season, they that in these dayes, will be called and taken for successorz of the Apostles, are admonished of their dutie. For although no man can require of them, to be such witnesse as sawe Christes resurrection, yet their office is, truly and boldly to beare witnesse of Christ, and of all those things that he aswell did, as suffered for vs: that all men may vnderstande, howe the redemption and saluation of mankind, is contayned in Christ onely. For whosoeuer will be taken for Apostolykes, being puffed vp onely with the bare name thereof, and neyther can nor will preache: they are not the right successorz of the Apostles, but foolish Passors, such as are described in Zachary, the .xj. Chapter. And on them, that sentence of Paule may truly be spoken: Woe vnto mee, if I preach not. It is our partes to acknowledge the goodnesse of God, which woulde haue his sonne to dye for our sinnes, and to ryse agayne for our iustification, and hath also giuen vs most faythfull witnesse, of Christes most profitable resurrection. Let vs therefore beleue their testimonye, that being borne agayne of the seede of the immortall worde, wee maye be made the heyres of God, and coheyres with Iesus Christ: to whome be blessing, honour, glorie, and power for ever. Amen.

Marke. 16.

1. Corin. 9.

The ninth Homelie.

THEN they appoynted two, Ioseph which is called Barfabas, whose surname was Iustus, and Matthias. And when they prayed, they sayde: Thou Lorde which knowest the hearts of all men, shewe whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take the roume of this ministration and Apostleship, from which, Iudas by transgression fell, that he might go to his owne place. And they gaue forth their lottes, and the lotte fell on Matthias, and hee was counted with the eleuen Apostles.

The choos-
ing of Mini-
sters must
be done du-
ly & orderly.

1. Cor. 3.
Roma. 1.
1. Timo. 3.
Math. 24.

Iohn. 10.

Let Minis-
ters be cho-
sen openly,
before the co-
gregation.
1. Timo. 3.



As the Church hath great neede of Mi-
nisters of the Worde, by whose meane it may be in-
structed and confirmed in the knowledge of God,
and mysteries of the true fayth: so it behoueth that
the same be duely & truely chosen and ordayned, that
all men may perceyue they be chosen and appoynted
of God. Which thing was the cause, that in the elec-
tion of a newe Apostle to be put in the rounge of Iu-
das, the primitiue Church proceeded with so great cir-
cumspetion & deliberation. And the holy ghost would haue all this hystory
diligently described, for that a sure rule and president might be left to them
that came after, whereby to order the election of their Ministers. The first
thing herein to be obserued, is, that S. Peter referreth all the matter to the
congregation, to be discussed by their whole consent and counsell. We are
taught hereby, that nothing ought to be appointed or decreed in the Church,
by any one mans priuate authoritie. For where the Church is, as Paule
sayth, Gods building, and Gods husbandry, yea the housholde and familye of
God. No man must take vpon him so much authoritie, as to thinke he hath
power giuen him, to prescibe any thing of his owne heade. And although
the rashnesse of some go so farre: yet he shall little profite amongst the true
shepe of Christ, which vse to harken and follow the voyce of Christ onely.
But let vs retorne to the narration of the hystory begoon by Luke, who ha-
uing recited Peters oration, now rehearseth the election of the newe Apostle,
which we must diligently expende in euerye poynt. First, he sheweth that
two be openly named, and set in the sight of the whole congregation. Then
with godly and deuout prayer they commit the election it selfe vnto God,
whose will and pleasure they seeke to enquire by religious lottes.
Then they appoynted twoo (sayth he) Ioseph which was called Barsabas,
whose surname was Iustus, and Matthias. Although the order howe this was
done, is not expressed: yet it is likely it was done by common consent of all
the congregation. For where Peter referred the matter to the whole Church
he coulde not pretermitt the iudgement of the Church. It seemeth therefore
euerye mans sentence was asked, and that they named all those to the
Church, whom they thought meetest for the office of an Apostle. And here
the Church at length agreed, that eyther Ioseph or Marthy should be chosen
to that rounge, as men who excelled the others in all kinde of vertues. And
both of them vndoubtedlye was such, that whether had had the place, the
lot coulde not seeme to haue erred. When they were named, they were bid-
den stande forth, that all men might looke vpon them and know them.
And this example of the Primitiue Church is very notable, wherby we
are taught that the election of Ministers of the worde and of the Church,
shoulde not be done in corners secretly, and within the house by a fewe per-
sons, but shoulde be done openly in the sight of the congregation, and before
all the people. For if a Bishop must haue the testimony of them that be with-
out, as Paule sayth, how much more ought he to be well knowne to them o-
uer whom he is put in charge: Which thing if it be not obserued, or be neg-
lected, eyther obscure or vnknowne persons, eyther else wicked and infect
with corrupt maners, shall be appointed ouer the Church. And they shall be
ouer-

ouerſers of the Church, which deſerue not the loweſt rounge in the Church. This we are taught by the rytes of the olde Teſtament, where, by Gods commaundement, Aaron and his children were openly choſen into the holpe miniſtery, all the people looking on. Neyther let it trouble vs, that Paule ſeemeth to giue authoritie to Titus and Timothie to choſe Biſhoppes. For he woulde not haue them of their priuate authoritie to doe any thing, but according to the dutie of Superintendentes, to take heede that ſuch as were worthy and meete, might be choſen for Miniſters. And it is not likely, that they had more graunted to them, than the Apoſtles had, which without the Churches counſaile, woulde neuer doe any thing in this matter. For not long after they choſe Deacons openly before the congregation, and Paule and Barnabas by election ordayned Elders in euery congregation.

Hereby is reprobued, that moſt corrupt and pernicious vſage of choſing of miniſters, which many yeares hath borne all the rule in this matter. Where manie times ſome one perſon, in many Churches vſeth to choſe and order Miniſters of his owne authoritie. Wherein chiefly, Abbots, Biſhops, and Monokes, be to blame. And many of them alſo that glory in the name of the Goſpell, & will be taken for reformers of the Church, handle not the matter much better. For whyle they put Monkes and Biſhops out of their vſurped poſſeſſion (as right is) yet they reſtore not to the Church the libertie, which by tyranny they tooke from it, but at their owne pleaſures adminiſtrate the things vſed before time, vſurped by the ſame Biſhops and Monkes. And hereof in many places ſprang that prepoſterous order, for ſuch to choſe and order Miniſters of the Church, as neyther well knowe the Miniſters, nor yet the Churches, ouer which they are ſet. And becauſe manie naughty affections are ioyned with ignozance, they are manie times therewithall ſolledde out of the waye, that without all regarde of religion in ſo weyghtye a matter, they ſeeme to minde none other thing, but to ſheue the power they haue ouer Churches, with as great pride as the Biſhops and Monkes did before them. Which euill and inconuenience, vnleſſe it be ſhortly reſſeſſed, it will bring vs forth both Simonie, & the deadly confuſion of all eccleſiaſticall diſcipline. And all this we are bound to the Biſhops of Rome for, which haue extorted from the Emperors, by bloody warres, that they alone might haue authoritie to giue Biſhopricks, and al other whatſoeuer eccleſiaſticall Benefices. There be yet in Germany not a fewe places, which can remember theſe battayles, & the Chriſtian blood ſhed about the ſame. Certes it is manifeſt, that Henric the fourth being Emperour, both for this & diuers other cauſes, ioyned battayle and fought with the Popes in open fielde threſcore and two times. And at length through the craft and counſayles of the Biſhops, had his owne ſonne as an enimie, ſent by them againſt him into the field, who at length perceyuing their ſubtiltie and ſleightes, beganne to withſtand them, but being ouercome with their importunitie and boldneſſe, graunted to Calixtus the ſecond all his authoritie: ſince which time, the libertie of the Church pining away, as of a deadly diſeaſe, is at length utterly loſt, which libertie, whoſoeuer will haue reſtored againe, be they Miniſters or Magiſtrates, they muſt knowe that they ought all to labour, to haue the auncient vſage of choſing Miniſters to be reſtored againe.

Nowe to come to the expoſition of this preſent hystory: when they had ſet two before the congregation, Ioseph and Marthy, men furniſhed and en-

Leuit. 8.
Numer. 30.

Actes. 6. &
14. cap.

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dued with all kinde of vertues : yet none of the Apostles woulde take so much vpon him, as to pronounce whether of them should be Apostle : naye, they thought it not safe to commit so weighty a matter to the number of voices, but turning to deuout prayers, referre all the successe of the matter to the infallible iudgement of God. For they saye : Thou Lorde that knowest the hartes of all men, shewe whether of these two thou hast chosen. &c. This is a singular document of godly mindes, and of such as will not ouer boldly chalenge to themselves any thing in Gods causes. Which example if they would with lyke religion imitate, which now a dayes haue the handling of Church matters and assayes, many things vndoubtedly would succede more happily than they doe.

The choosing of Ministers must be ascribed to God alone.

Act. 13. 14.

1. Timo. 3.
and. 5.
Titus. 1.

Math. 24.
1. Corin. 4.

Hereof we gather that the election of Ministers dependeth of God alone, and must be referred to him. We thinke it the dutie of the Church in this case, being lawfully assembled, to laye aside all priuate affections, & to search out such, as to whom the function of the Church, may safely and conveniently be committed. And here we principally require a feruent desire of religion, whereto fasting was wont to be ioyned, that their prayers might be the more ardent and earnest. And when there are any found, that are thought worthy of so great a charge, yet must we not then attribute to much to the iudgement of men. But the most commodious and safest way is, to referre all the successe of our counsailes to the iudgement of God. Although I am not ignorant, that we finde certaine places of Scripture, wherby Ministers myght seeme to be chosen by the iudgement of men, and the matter appeareth not to haue bene determined by lottes, as here it was, whereto these sayinges seeme chieflie to be referred, which are written. 1. Timoth. 3. &c. 5. Titus. 1. But I suppose mention is there made only of such things, as are requisite in this case for men to doe, as ministers and guides, the order and president of the Primitive Church standing still in force, the which for diuers and weightie causes, is necessary to be obserued still in the Church. For, first it is euident that the Church is the houtholde and family of God (as was aforesayde) wherein the Ministers be as it were Bayliffes and Stewardes. Howbeit, none that is wise taketh so much vpon him in another mans house, as to prescribe at his pleasure eyther the most vnderlyng seruant or else the Stewarde of the same. What absurditie therefore shall it be for any man, to be so bolde in the house of God to doe it, and to commit a matter of so great weyght, to the iudgement of our blinde reason : further, in the choosing of Ministers, no man will denye, but that the chieftest regarde ought to be of the minde. For in the minde is the residence of such vertuous qualities, as the holy ghost requireth in a Minister. But I praye you what man iudging of another mans mynde can be sure of hys iudgement : Must we not confesse, that men herein are deceyued euery daye : since at length we finde by euident tokens, howe naughtye they are, whom before we tooke for very perfect persons : The Apostles may herein be examples vnto vs, who were ignorant a great whyle what Iudas was, although he were a theefe, & such a one as robbed God of his hono. But God is of such propertie & condicion, that he can be beguiled with no craft or dissimulation. For he seeth not only what is without vs, but searcheth the hartes and repnes, yea, he foresaith the thoughts and counsailes of men, long before they arylse in their myndes. Therefore all this matter can be to no body

more

more safely committed, than to his iudgement. Which thing chiefly moued the Apostles in this businesse, to saye: Thou Lorde which knowest the harts of all men, shewe whether of these twaine thou hast chosen. &c. In the which wordes they plainly confesse, what moued them to runne to the iudgement of God. Verily, for that they were not able to see into the hartes of other men. Whereas we therfore cannot but confesse the same likewise, in our choosing of Ministers: we must needs seeme ouer rashe, if we will make our selues Iudges in a matter, where the minde is chiefly to be considered. Last of all, the maner & order of election which the Apostles vsed, both getteth the Ministers no small authoritie in the minds of the hearers, & encourageth them also against the manaces and attemptes of the wicked, and other daungers hanging ouer them. For thus it commeth to passe, that the verie enemies (if they will confesse a truth) cannot suspect the Ministers eyther of temeritie or falshood. For who can be thought to haue crept into the Ministry by vnlawfull meanes, or through fauour and authoritie of men, which is declared a Minister by the iudgement of God: Or who with a safe conscience dare eyther contemne or hate him, whom he knoweth to haue bene elected and ordayned by his owne praiers, & the praiers of the whole congregation: In like sort these things animate and embolden the Ministers, a thing very necessary for them, against the threates and attemptes of this worlde. For where they knowe they are not elected by the counsell and fauour of man, but by Gods ordinance: they may assure themselves of Gods ayde and assistance, if they will be faithfull in their office. They knowe it is sayde vnto them: Be not afrayde of their faces, for I am with thee to deliuer thee, sayth the Lorde. Agayne: they may be sure they shall finde God a reuenger and punisher, if they be slothfull, wicked and vnfaitfull in their office. For they knowe that it is sayde to all Ministers which is spoken to the Prophet: If I saye vnto thee, concerning the wicked man, that (without doubt) he must dye, and thou giuest him not warning, nor speakest vnto him, that hee maye turne from his euill way, and so liue: then shal the same vngodly man die in his owne vnrightheousnesse, but his bloude will I require of thine hande. The consideration whereof me thinketh gaue such boldenesse to the Prophetes and Apostles, that neyther the flatteries of false brethren, nor the threates of wicked enemies, could daunt or discourage them. For after this sort Amos the Prophet deluded the crafty counsell of Amasias. For where he exhorted the Prophet to fflye awaye, least Ieroboam the King shoulde laye holde on him, for his sermons that were so full of threates and rebukes, and so come in daunger of aduersitie: he answered on this wise: I am neyther Prophete, nor sonne of Prophete, but a keeper of cattell. Nowe as I was breaking downe Mulberies, and going after the cattell, the Lorde rooke me and sayde vnto me: Goe thy waye and prophecie vnto my people of Israell. &c. By the which wordes the Prophet meaneth that he did nothing of his owne head or priuate counsell, but went about the office enioyned him of God, and that therfore he coulde not giue ouer the charge, that God had layde vpon him. The same Amos in the thirde chapter sayth: When the Lyon roareth, who will not be afrayde? Seeing then the Lord God himselfe speaketh, who will not prophecy? Hereto are to be referred, the things, that the Apostles did with lyke courage, before the counsell at Hierusalem. For when they were forbidden to preache any more in the name of the Lorde Jesus, they answered: Wee

must

Hierc. i.

Ezech. 3.
and. 33.

Amos. 7.

Amos. 3.

Actes. 4.
& 5.

Galath. 1.

The lotte of
Ministerie,
or Apostles
Shippe.

Math. 20.

1. Cor. 15.

2. Cor. 11. 12.

must rather obey God than man **Agayne**: Whether it be right in the sight of God to harken vnto you more than God, iudge yee. But for what cause had it bene lawfull for the Apostles thus to saie, if they had not certainly vnder-
stode, they were called and chosen to this office by God. And surely in wayne shall a man looke for such boldenesse of speech, and assurance in doing, in those which through fauour, and by vnlawfull meanes, craepe into the Ministerie before they be called. For knowing in their conscience how they come in by craft, and being in their daungers, by whose meane they come to such promotion, they dare doe no notable thing in setting forth the truth and glorie of God, but playing the egregious tryflers, studie to please both God and man: yea, at the length casting aside all feare of God, they giue themselves wholly to hunt for worldly praise, & so lyke rattes perish by bewraying themselves, because (as Paule sayth) they be not the seruantes of God, but men pleasers. Therefore whosoever would haue in the Church the auncient authoritie of discipline, and the boldenesse of the Prophetes and Apostles in the Ministers: and to be short, the olde integritie and soundnesse of the whole Church: let him labour to reuoke and call agayne this auncient order of choosing of Ministers, shewed vs by the example of the Apostles.

But before we goe from this matter: it is requisite to see with what wordes, they describe the office of the Apostles. They call it the lot of the Ministerie and Apostleship. By this worde lot, they allude to the maner of casting lottes, whereby a litte after, they meane to enquire Gods minde and pleasure. But in the diuision of things, a lot is oftentimes taken for a part or portion of any thing that falleth to vs by lot. In the which sense, they here call the lot of the Ministerie or Apostleship, a part of the same. Therefore they oftentimes acknowledge and confesse an equalitie of state and condicion among the Apostles. For if Matthias receyued a part of that Ministerie, which was as well committed to Peter as others: then none of them obtayned the whole, whereby he might be called the heade or Lorde of others. Neyther could Peters authoritie in preaching the Gospell, be greater than eyther Iohns or Matthias, because they all receyued but one and the same commaundement of the Lorde Iesus, as is playne. Againe, they ioyne the names of Ministerie and Apostleship together, both to withstand ambition, and to fortifie the worthynesse of the office. For where it is a Ministerie that is here entreated of, it is foolishnesse and great absurditie, vnder colour thereof to seeke reuerence of the people, or to exercise tyrannicall Lordship ouer them. But rather it behoueth vs to obserue the rule of Christ: Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and who so will be chiefe among you, let him be your seruant. And for this cause Paule shoulde be preferred before many of the Apostles, because he laboured more than all the other in the Church of Christ. There is a preposterous order in the Church in these dayes, where they are counted the first and chiefe, that labor least in the ministry of the Church, that liue most pompeously of all others vpon the Churches goods, and which heape vp treasures to them and their posteritie of the same. Agayne, least the name of Ministerie might seeme to signify any vile or base condicion, & that the contemners of the Gospell should take no occasion of bngodlynesse thereby, nor y Ministers themselves esteeme euer the worse of their office, they make mention also of an Apostleship. By the which worde we are taught that they are the Ministers of

of Christ & his Church which are occupied in that ministry. For an Apostle signifieth as much as a Legate or one that is sent. But he is no Legate that runneth of his owne heade, and handleth his owne matters, but he that is sent from a more excellent and superiour, and is appointed for the intreatie and discussion of publike affayres. In so much that Legates are not esteemed with wise men, so much for their owne persons sake, as they be for his worthynesse from whome they are sent. And the Apostles were sent from Jesus Christ, as we hearde before, who would haue them to be witnesses ouer all the worlde, of the redemption and saluation of mankind, which he had purchased by the merite of his incarnation and death. Such therefore ought they to be esteemed, and not to be contemned because of their outward port, which is vile and abiect in the sight of the worlde. For it is Christes saying: If any man receyue whomsoever I sende, hee receyue me. And whosoever receyue me, receyue him that sent me. And Paule to the same purpose sayth: We be messengers in the rume of Christ, euen as though God did beseech you thorowe vs. Therefore euen as in the Apostleship the ministry must be considered, least the Ministers puffed up with ambition, aspyre to Lordship and bearing of rule: so in the ministerie let both the Ministers and hearers remember the Apostleshippe, least eyther the hearers contemne the Ministers, or the Ministers thinking to slenderly of the ministry, forget their dutie and dignitie.

Now let vs come to the last part of this place, wherein is declared, how they sought the will and pleasure of God by casting of lottes. They gaue out their lottes (sayth he) and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was counted with the eleuen Apostles. Here we first haue to speake of lottes. For there are places of Scripture not a few, wherein soothsaying Artes, and curiositie of mans wit, in searching for secretes and things to come, are earnestly condemned. See Leuiticus the ix. and Deuter. viij. Chapter. And the Prophete Esaye in the viij. Chapter, calleth all men to the law and testimonie, & as for all other meanes of seeking Gods counsaile, he forbiddeth with great authority. And Micheas in the fifth Chapter excludeth out of the kingdome of Christ, all soothsayers, and such lyke rabble of men. But we must marke how there is two kindes of lotteries or casting of lottes: the one lawfull, the other vnlawfull. That is vnlawfull, when they go about after the curiositie of mans brayne, by sciences condemned of God, to search out secretes, and what is to come, the knowledge whereof belongeth not vnto vs. This the Astrologers vse which wyrite Prognostications of the course and successe of yeres to come, according to the Clowdes, the Planets, and influences of heauen. Which kinde of men reigneth now a dayes amongst Christian men, not without the great shame of christian religion. To these may we ioyne those, that when they haue the houre of ones Natinitie, looke vpon the Ascendant, and according to the position and figure of heauen, pronounce of the course of his whole life, of the nature, condicions and disposition, and come to such impietie, that they put man the excellentest creature of God, yea, and Lorde of all the things that God hath created, vnder the rule and gouernance of the Planets and starres. To these appertaine they which are giuen to the studie of Geomantie, and thinke they are able to foretell the successe and effects of all thinges. And as manye as by any Art forbidden by God, search after secret matters and things to come. For where these men

Iohn. 13.

2. Cor. 5.

Matthias, is
chosen by
lottes.Unlawfull
lottes.Geomantie
is a kinde of
profession,
consisting of
circles and
figures made
on the ground.

Lawfull
lottes.

Prouer. 18.

Numer. 33.

Prouer. 16.

Matthias is
chosen Apost-
le, and Bar-
sabas refused.

of a curious audacitie go about to pierce into Gods secrets, their boldnesse must plainly be iudged to be wicked. The lawfull kinde of lottery or drabbing of lottes is, when the successe of a thing lawfull, yea, necessary, and belonging to vs, is committed by lottes to the iudgement of God. And this is vsed commonly, for the more authoritie of thinges in hande, and for the auoyding of contentions, which men, ledde with hatred or priuate lucre, vse for to seeke. And this kinde of drawing lottes Salomon sheweth vs, where he sayth: The lot pacifieth variance, and parteth the mighty a sunder. The vse of this kind of lottery is very auncient, and the very Ethnicks thought it not irreligious or vnlawfull. Homere writeth that the Graekes in times past vsed it, when they chose any out of the number of the valiaunt Captaynes, to fight with Hector, demanding the combate. The Romanes vsed the same, when they sent forth their Magistrates to beare rule abroad in the Prouinces, because they shoulde not seeme to take authoritie or beare office, without the Gods appoyntment. The Israelites also were commaunded to deuide or distribute the lande of Chanaan by lottes. And the vse of lottes in the deuiding of inheritance, hath bene vsed amongst vs, & may be retayned without hurt of Christian religion, so it be not corrupted with anye other kinde of superstition. Therefore the Apostles in this doing, take no vngodlye thing in hande, but are onely carefull to vnderstande Gods will, and to that ende make their hartly and faythfull prayer before. And it is plaine by Salomon, that men in these dayes also should not offende, if they would vse lottes with the lyke godlynesse or religion, in the lyke case. For he separateth them farre from things chaunceing by casualtie, and putteth them vnder the gouernance of Gods prouidence, saying: The lottes are cast into the lap, but the ordering thereof standeth all in the Lorde.

But Ioseph is pretermitted or put backe, and Matthie appoynted to succede Iudas, in the roume of an Apostle. But as farre as maye be gathered by this place, Ioseph to mans iudgement seemed the maeter and better man, who beside the surname of Barsabas (which signifieth the sonne of an othe, that is to saye, one most faythfull and true of his worde) was also called Iustus. And as touching Matthias, there is nothing mentioned in the Scripture, beside his bare name. Yet he in the iudgement of God, is preferred before the other. This thing serueth both for our instruction and consolation. For it teacheth vs not to be proude of the iudgement of men, and of the great estimation they haue vs in. For as men maye be deceyued in their iudgements: so they oftentimes chaunge their iudgements, as they see mens fortune vseth to chaunge. And there are examples in all Nations, which teach vs that they haue bene throbne into extreame ignominie, which not long before, that many headed beast the people, extolled about the starres. Let vs therefore seeke to stande vpriight in Gods iudgement, who as he cannot be deceyued, so whome he once fauoureth, he neuer casteth of, if that they continue in their dutie. Againe, this example comforteth vs, when we see our selues charged with vnjust preiudices of men, or rather altogether reiected. For then we must not thinke, that therfore God also contemneth vs, forasmuch as he dependeth not vpon mans authoritie, but many times chooseth the despisedst among men, to the weyghtiest and greatest affairs, to thende that all glozy may be giuen to him, and that no flesh should exalt it selfe in his sight. See 1. Cor. 1. Moreover, we must not pretermitt

to consider in this place how neither Ioseph, nor yet those that fauoured him murmured or grutchted when they hearde Matthe admitted by the Lorde. Neyther is it lyke that Ioseph was discouraged therefore, forasmuch as he knewe there were diuers other states and callings, wherin he might declare his obedience and seruice vnto God. Let vs folowe the example of so great modestie, and being content with our estate, let vs not couet to climbe any higher, least we rashlye accuse the iudgement of God, and whyle we thinke our selues worthy of greater honor, be founde vnworthy of that place that God hath set vs in. There be many implements in a well stored house, and also great diuersitie among the same. The chiefe rourne the Apostles are worthy of, which they obtayned through the mere fauour of God. They continued in the same rourne and place with constant faith, contemnyng themselves lyuyng innocently, and charitably, whose steps whosoever will followe, they shall liue an immortall and blessed life with them in Christ Iesus our sauour: to whom be blessing, honour, power, and glory for ever. Amen.

The seconde chapiter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The tenth Homelie.

WHEN the fyftie dayes were come to an ende, they were all with one accorde together in one place. And sodeinly there came a sounde from heauen as it had bene the comming of a mighty winde, and it filled all the house where they sate. And there appeared vnto them clouen tongues, lyke as they had bene of fire. And it sate vpon eche one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Ghost.



Amongst the promises wherewith our Sauour Iesus Christ bleth oftentimes to comfort his Apostles, there is none more often repeated, than that promise touching y sending of the holy ghost. For where he sayth they should be faine to pleade, their causes before Princes; and Rulers, he putteth all feare out of their myndes, in that he sayth, they should haue the holy ghost to counsell them, who should furnishe them with Argumentes, and all kinde of vtterance. And when he was nere vnto his death, he iterateth the same promise of his spirite thre or foure times, which he sayth, should be vnto them a Comforter, a Counsellor, and a guide in all they should go about. Finally, when he was risen from death, he both admoniseth them againe of his

his promise, and commaundeth them to wayte for the same holye Ghost at Hierusalem. And this so diligent a repetition of his promise must not be thought superfluous. For it serued both for the instruction of the Apostles, least eyther they should runne vnprepared to the function of so high an office, or else through feare of daunger should be dismayde or discouraged. And it is very profitable for vs in these dayes, for we may gather hereof, that the Apostles doctrine is inspired from God, and may not without manifest impietie, be dispised. But least any obscuritie or ambiguitie of so great a matter might remaine, it behoued that the spirite so often promised, should not come into the mindes of the Apostles, by any secreete maner of inspiration, but visible, and not without publike miracle. Which thing, Luke sheweth both was done, and howe it was done, in this place he declareth diligentely, and woth great perspicuitie. It is an Hystorie verie woorthie, whose circumstances euerie one, should be thoroughly considered.

After what
for the Apo-
stles receiued
the holye
Ghost.

Psal. 33.

1. Pet. 1.

Luke. 1.

Math. 16.
Iohn. 6.

Psal. 133.

Before we enter into the Euangelistes wordes, something must be sayde touching the holy ghost, that we may well vnderstand what the Apostles receyued. First, we must not imagine, that before this tyme, eyther there was no holy ghost, or that the Apostles were wholly destitute of him. For, that he is from euerlasting, of the same substance that God is, it is plaine by manie testimonies of the olde Testament. Dauid verily confesseth, that all the hostes of heauen were made by the breath of the Lordes mouth. And Peter teacheth vs that the Prophetes in tymes past, were inspired with the spirite of Christ, by reuelation of which spirit, they prophesied long before, both the afflictions that Christ should suffer, and also the glorie that he should haue. Also the Archangell Gabriel promisseth that Marie the Virgin should conceyue and bring forth, through the operation of the holye ghost. As touching the Apostles, there is no man will affirme, that is in his wittes, that they vtterly lacked the spirite of God, vntill this day of Pentecost. For although theire weaknesse and imperfection was great: yet they both knewe Iesus Christ, and plainly confessed, that he was the promised Sauour of mankind, which thing, as Christ testifieth, they coulde not doe, without the reuelation of the holye ghost. Neyther must we expounde this Hystorie of the substance of the holy spirite, as though the thirde person in Trinitie (as auncient writers call it) had come downe and bene inclosed in the mindes of the Apostles. For this person can be contayned in no one place, but (which is a sure and certain note of Godheade) entereth through all things, and filleth all places both in heauen and in earth. To the which thing Dauid had a respect where he said: Whither shall I go from thy spirite, or whether shall I go from thy presence? If I climbe vp into heauen, thou art there: if I go downe into hell, thou art there also. &c. Therefore it is manifest, that all this Hystorie ought to be expounded, of the operation and gistes of the holy ghost. And the Apostles are sayde to receyue the holy ghost, bicause the same (which other wise is incomprehensible) wrought effectually in them, and endued and furnished them with all maner of gistes, as was mete to the execution of so weightie an office. After which sense euerie where in the Scripture, they are sayde to haue God, and the spirit of God present in them, in whom he worketh, and who suffer themselves to be guided and directed by him: and they lacke God and his spirite, which withstand his working, and rather giue themselves to the vnruly desires of the flesh, and the worlde, than vnto the gouerning of the holy ghost.

Pet

Yet these things shall appeare more plaine by the context of the Hystorie, wherein first we will note the tyme, then the Apostles persons, and last of all the maner of this sending, all in order.

Luke beginneth with the discription of the tyme, not so much for Hystoricall order sake, and to purchase and get credite to the thing that was done, as to aduertise vs of verie great mysteries, whereof the diuine prouidence had chiefly a consideration. It was the day of Pentecost, which otherwheres the scripture calleth the feast of weekes, or of newe corne, bicause on that day the Shewbread of newe corne was offered. It toke the name of Pentecost amongst the Grekes, of the number, bicause it was celebrated the fifteth day after Pasche or Easter. He that will see the Ceremonies obserued on that day, may looke them in Leuit. 23. and Deut. 16. The chiefe thing here to be considered, was the remembraunce of the lawe, which the Scripture sayth, was giuen that day and vttered by the mouth of Gods Maiestie. It shall appeare that this day, was appoynted by God for this businesse, not without a cause, if we consider the number of people which vsed to be present at this feast, and well marke Christ to be the truest, and best expositor of the olde lawe. For it is euery where seene that God vseth to notifie and publishe to all men, the things that concerne our saluation. For he would haue (as Paule sayth) all men to be saued, and to come vnto the knowledge of truth. It was therfore most commodious, that the preaching of the Gospell should begin vpon one of the greatest holy dayes, and amongst the greatest number of people, that both the more people might be instructed, and also that the miracle of the holy ghost, which should shortly be published to diuers nations, might after a sort prepare for the Apostles, the way of preaching. And the Lorde obserueth in the Apostles, that thing which we reade him selfe obserued, while he was on the earth. For as he chose publike places alwayes to preach in: so was he wont on the holy dayes to go to Hierusalem, that aduall his doctrine as miracles might be knowne to the more people. Yea, he would be crucified at the feast of Pasche, that the knowledge of his death being so profitable, might the sooner, and the vnder be published abroad. It shall be profitable for vs diligently to marke the tokens of Gods goodnesse, which teach vs, that the redemption made by Christ Jesus, is offered of God to all men, and appertayneth to all men, neyther can we haue any surer consolation, any where in our temptations. Verily Sathan will not lightly denie, that Jesus Christ is a Saviour and a Redeemer. But he vseth this pollicie in assaulting our fayth, that the redemption which is by Christ, appertayneth not vnto vs, and teacheth vs to measure the merites of Christ and the labours thereof, according to our worthinesse or vnworthinesse. And it cannot be chosen, but here our fayth must quayle, forasmuch as there is no man, but findeth himselfe most vnworthie of saluation, when he thoroughly hath considered his owne nature. But the consideration of those thinges, which teach Christ to be the vniuersall Saviour of all them that beleue in him, and a most boundfull Author of health, that is glad to benefite most men, doth most strongly prop and beare vp our fayth thus faltring. But the other cause is more diligently to be searched, where we sayde that the spirit of Christ was giuen in Pentecost, byrause of the lawe once published on that day. It is manifest that all the things which happened to the Jewes, were shadowes and figures of things to come, to the accomplishment and performance whereof,

1
The holpe
Ghost was
sent at the
feast of Pen-
tecost.

Leuit. 23.
Deut. 16.

1. Tim. 2.

The Epistle
to Ianuare.
119.

2. Corin. 3.

Math. 5.

Galat. 4.

2. Corin. 3.

II
The state
and condition
of the Apo-
stles.

Jesus Christ from everlasting was ordained, and appointed. Therefore Augustines obseruation seemeth to me neyther superfluous nor curious, who in the consideration of this present Hystorie, compareth it with the figure of the olde Testament, touching the setting forth of the lawe, where there is a great likenesse of all circumstances, and a iust proportion or measure of mysteries on both sides to be obserued, which we haue thought good to expounde by Austens wordes. A sheepe is slaine (sayth he) the Passecouer is holden, and within fiftie dayes after, the lawe written with the finger of God, is giuen to make vs feare. Christ is slaine, who like a sheepe was led to be offered, as Esay witnesseth. The true Passecouer is celebrated, and within fiftie dayes after, the holie ghost which is the finger of God, is giuen to make vs to loue. &c. Yea, Paule the Apostle diligentely compareth the preaching of the Gospell, which began at Pentecost, with the publishing of the lawe, and by that comparison proueth the authoritie of the Gospell. And the Scripture sheweth that Christ is the ende of the lawe, whereof he professeth himselfe to be a true interpreter. Therefore there could be no fitter tyme chosen to sende the holy ghost in, than the fifteth day after Easter, which by reason of the lawe then published was very notable. For hereby we are taught, that there is but one spirit of the olde and new Testament, and not two diuers as the Many chies in tyme past dreamed. For Christ would not take vpon him to haue interpreted the lawe, if it had bene published with any other spirite than the spirite of God, neyther would haue commended and celebrated the memorizall thereof, with so wholesome a myracle. Further, we are taught that the true sence of the lawe can be gathered of none other, than of the spirite of Christ. For where Christ onely hath satisfiied the lawe, to whome the lawe led vs as a guide and Scholemayster: they shall in vaine traueyle about the vnderstanding thereof, which are destitute of the spirit of Christ, and faith in Christ, which he worketh in vs. Which thing is the cause that Paule sayth, the Jewes haue yet the bayle before their eyes, by reason whereof they cannot looke vpon Moses face, that is, they cannot vnderstande the true and plaine meaning of the lawe. Therefore the Jewes and false Christians, the mainteyners of mans righteousnesse, object to vs in vaine the lawe, and workes thereof, whereas Christ is both the ende of the lawe, and without him there is no true knowledge of the lawe. But in the meane season the contempners of the olde lawe are reproued, who thinke there is no more vse of the same to be had among the Christians. As though the will of God were not the same now, that it was wont to be, and as though we also had not neede to be led by the hande of the lawe vnto Christ, that distrusting our owne righteousnesse, we might learne to take holde of the righteousnesse of God, that cometh by fayth in Jesus Christ. In dede we confesse that the Ceremonies of the lawe are abolished, bicause all figures are fulfilled in Christ: yet the vse of the lawe remaineth whole and sounde, whose duetie it is to teach vs our vnrighteousnesse, and corruption of nature, and all our satisfaction for the same to be in Christ.

Furthermoze, it behoueth to consider the persons of the Apostles, that we may vnderstande what they were doing at this tyme, where certaine things are to be repeated out of the first Chapter. First, we heard howe they obeyed the commaundement of Christ, being nowe readie to ascende into heauen, who bade them returne to Hierusalem, and there to wayte for the spirite which he promised them. Therefore they returne thither and there abide,

vnto

vnto this day in the which the spirit is sent, as a little after we shall see, where Luke sayth plainly, this happened at Hierusalem. Moreover, he attributeth vnanimitie and concord to them. For they went not dispersed by and done the Citie, neyther was there such brabole and contention betwene them, as was wont to be, but they tarped with one accorde, all together in one place. Adde vnto these a thirde poynt, whereof mention also is made before, howe they continually persisted in praier. For it is not to be thought that they were become euer the slacker in praying, seeing they were compassed about wpyth daunger on euery side, and (as appeareth by chosling of Mathias) prepared themselue diligently to the administration of their office.

These things serue for the publike instruction of vs all. For they teache vs howe they ought to prepare themselues, which desire to haue the holie ghost giuen vnto them, and to haue his giftes increased in them. Hereof we haue neede by reason of our inwarde and naturall corruption, wherewpyth, onlesse we be bozne againe, we shall not see the kingdome of God. We haue neede of the same spirite, bicause of the worlde and the desires of the fleshe, wherewith we be many tymes reuoked from the way of saluation. We haue neede also of the same by reason of temptations, wherewith Sathan oftentimes goeth about to bring vs in doubt of the certentie of our saluation and redemption, and would easily ouercome vs, except we were confirmed wpyth the spirite of Christ, which (as Paule sayth) is the sure earnest, and pledge of our saluation. But the same spirit entereth not into a froward soule. Therefore we haue neede to prepare our selues, that we may be meete to receyue him. First therefore obedience is requisite, whereby it behoueth vs to be in subiection to the will of God, and to his precepts: yea, euen in those things that to our reason seeme dangerous, hurtfull, or superfluous. For, by what meanes shall we thinke, it will come to passe that they shall haue the spirite of God giuen them, which are not ashamed to rebell, agaynst God: God can not abide that they shall glozie in his lawe, and in his worde, which runne on in disobedience. Howe much lesse will he vouchsafe, to giue his holie spirite to such: Furthermore, it is meete that they be of one accorde, and in charitie together, which shall receyue the holie ghost. For where God himselfe is charitie, he requireth earnestly the studie thereof in those that be his: yea, Christ appoynted it as a Cognizance for his to be knowne by. And it cannot be that Christ will iudge them worthe of the spirite of Christian brotherhode, that are deuided by hatred, enuie, contentions, and open enimitie, and so declare themselues, to be straungers from the bodie of Christ, which is the Church or Congregation. Moreover, vnto the studie of concord, and obedience, must be ioyned feruent and continuall prayers. For, although God promise his spirit frely, and giueth the same of his more grace, he will yet haue vs to pray to him, and aswell both the maiestie of God require we should praye to him, as the dutie whereby we be bound to him. Neyther can we declare any more manifest token of our fayth, than if we go aboute by prayer to obtaine those things, that belong to our saluation. Therefore we heare Dauid saye: Make me a cleane heart, O God, and renue a right spirite within me. Cast mee not away from thy presence, and take not thy holie spirite from me. And we say euery day as Christ commaundeth vs: Let thy kingdome come. Yea, Christ himselfe promisseth vs that we shall not aske God his spirite in vaine. Where he sayth: If you being euill can giue good gyftes vnto your children, howe much

more

Howe men
must prepare
themselues
to receiue the
holie ghost.

Iohn. 3.

2. Corin. 1.
5. Ephes. 1.

Psalms. 50.

Iohn. 13.

Psalms. 51.

Luke. 11.

The spirite
of Christ, is
the Authoz
of conoord &
holinesse.

more shal your father of heauen giue the holy spirit, to them that desire it of him. Therefore let vs in these dayes ioyne together these thre, obedience, vniuersitie, and prayers, after the example of the Apostles, and then shall we perceyue in our selues a marueylous comming forwarde in true godlinesse, and a most wholesome increase of the holy ghost.

Furthermore, the consideration of the Apostles teacheth vs, that the spirite of Christ which worketh by preaching of the gospel, is a spirite of conoord and holinesse, and not the Authoz of dissention and carnall libertie, as some in these dayes crie out, which by this meanes would bring the doctrine of the gospel in suspicion and hatred, because (say they) it is the seede of dissention, and a planting of licentious liuing. But we may easily aunswere the slanderers. For as the Apostles being at vnitie and conoord receyued the holy spirite: so it is plaine that after they had receyued him, their conoord was not disturbed, but euery day more and more confirmed. And the same effect of the spirite is in all them that beleue. For, it cannot be that he can be Authoz of discorde amongst them, whom, being knit together in one head Iesus Christ, he maketh members of one, and the same bodie, and coheyyres of the same kingdome. And as it is impossible, that the members of one bodie, quickened with one spirite can be at variance together: so can they not strue amongst themselves, which are brought by the doctrine of the gospel vnto Christ, and are indued with his spirite. As touching that our enemies object to vs the libertie of the flesh, we denie it. For whosoouer hath any taste of the doctrine of the gospel, shall confesse, that the preaching therof beateth downe the same. Neyther doth the spirite of Christ by outward worde onely oppugne the same, but it also consecrateth the minds vnto God, that they, which a little while ago were the bondslauers of sinne, are now become the Temples of the liuing God. In the meane season we denie not, but there are many which abuse the colour of the gospel, to sow dissention, and to plant libertie. But ought the gospel to be charged therewith? I pray you what wilt man condemne the Magistrate, because diuers vnder the colour thereof, haue become Tyrantes, and oppressors of the libertie of their Countrey? Why doe we not rather marke the vse of the Magistrate, which is appointed for that ende, that the lust of priuate persons should be restrayned, and violence and tyrannie be brided. Euen so let vs confesse that the right vse of the Gospel and effect of the holie ghost is, onely to set vp true conoord, and holly honestie of life. Nay, if we shall confesse the truth, there is none other conoord acceptable before God, than that which is amonge the faythfull in Iesus Christ, which are borne againe of the worde and spirite of God. Neyther can there be any other true holinesse and innocencie, than that whereof Christes spirite is the Authoz. For that holinesse which men counterfeit without his spirite, is hypocriticall, and is not able to abide the iudgement of God, as straunge from the righteousness of Christ, which bleth to supplie all the defectes and wantes of the faythfull.

The maner
how the holy
ghost was
sent.

Now to these aforesayde poyntes. Luke ioyne the maner of his sending, which was visible, both because the Apostles might conceyue, through presence of the spirite, the greater confidence and boldnesse to go about their office, and also for our cause, that it might appeare how Iesus Christ neuer forsaketh his Church, but defendeth it by his inuisible grace, which he declared by the sending of his holy spirit. For hereto serueth that notable promise:

I will

I will not leaue you comfortlesse. And againe. Beholde I am with you vntill the ende of the worlde. But touching the maner howe this thing was here done, three things remaine to be discusled.

First, there was sodainly a noyse from heauen. And it is not without a mysterie, that these things come to passe sodainly or vnloked for. For this is alwayes Gods vsage, that he then most truly performeth his promises, when we least looke for them, yea when there is no more helpe remainyng in man. So he performeth his promise, in deliuering his people out of the bondage of Egypt, foure hundred yeaeres after the Israelites were bereft of all libertie, and were constrayned to beholde most horrible examles of Tyrannie, in their newe borne babes, and haue nothing safely to trust vnto. So in this place he sendeth the holy ghost now sodainly, & when they least thought of it, whose comyng he had deferred now a.xi.daies long. We are taught by these examles, patiently to wayte for the promises of God. For where God is truth it selfe, he cannot deceiue. And forasmuch as he is our Lord, & we his seruants, it becometh vs to attende his leysure, and not to prescribe him any time. Tarie thou the Lordes leysure (sayth Dauid) be stronge and he shall comfort thine heart, and put thou thy trust in the Lorde. And the Prophete sayth: If he tarie, yet wayte thou for him. For in verie deede he will come, and not be slacke. And such a noyse and sounde came from heauen, bicause we might knowe, that the holye Apostles endued with an heauenly and diuine spirite, were become preachers of an heauenly and diuine doctrine, and not mans, the auctoritie and credite whereof might be called in doubt. This serueth to confute the foolishnesse of such, as with the ritche glutton, require teachers to come from an other worlde, from heauen, or from hell. And what souer thinges are sayde of mans saluation and dutie, they reiect with this scoffe, saying: there was yet neuer none that came eyther from heauen or hell, to tell vs what is there to do. So they disclose howe theyr wicked mindes are boyde of all religion. For onlesse these wicked men had vtterly put away all shamefastnesse, they would knowe that the sonne of God came downe from heauen into fleshe, and rose againe from death, and most saythfully declared vnto vs, the mysteries of the kingdome of heauen. They would knowe that the holy ghost came downe from heauen, and spake these things by the Apostles, which they haue taught vs, touching the meane of our saluation, and what our dutie is. But he that would require any newe kinde of learning, yea though an Angell brought it from heauen, he ought not to be beleued, but accursed.

Secondly, a certaine blast or violent winde rusthing in, filled all the house where the Apostles dwelt. And that the spirite is signified by blast or winde it is no doubt, bicause the very name of spirite is a borrowed speache, and the diuine power is so called, for that it pierceth and by his power conserueth all things. And the Hebrewes vse this worde Ruach, which is as well vsed for the winde, as for the spirite. Christ woulde in this place therefore vse the token of winde, to set before our eyes as it were, the strength and efficacie of the holy spirite, which is incomprehensible to mans capacitie, and can be attayned to, by no power of man. It is better to here himselfe interpretate the same thing. For reasoning with Nicodemus, of the operation of his spirite, by the which, they that beleue are borne againe, he sayth: The winde bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the noyse thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh,

Iohn.14.
Math.28.

Suddenly a
noyse came
from heauen.

Psalme.27.
Habac.24

Galat.1.

A vehement
winde filleth
all the house.

Iohn.3

nor whither it goeth. For as the wit of man coulde not hitherto shewe vs, for a certayntie, the causes and begynnynge of the wynde, although they haue long and much searched for the same: so the operation of the holy spirite, farre passeth the capacite of man, although we effectuallye feele the same in our hartes. And euen as the blowyng of windes can not be let by any device, or force of men: so the spirite of Christ which worketh by the gospel, feareth not the strength of men, nor is not hindred therby to shew his power, where and when he wyl. Yea foolish and ridiculous is the endeour of them whosoener wyl strue with God, to byng the spirite and worde of God to their bent, & wyl holde them within boundes of them appoynted. Examples hereof we haue euery where, but the Apostles examples of right, ought to haue the first place. They were commaunded of the Lorde, that they should fyll all the world with their preachyng. This seemed a thing impossible to be done, by simple vnlearned men, & despised persons. Yea, as many as were counted eyther of power or wysdome in the worlde withstode them. Yet the spirite of Christ by the ministerie of the Apostles burst into all the worlde, which this vehement blast here did foreshignifie, and in despite of the worlde, and Prince of the worlde, the doctrine of the gospel was published throughout all Nations. Let these thinges comfort vs against the wayne enterpryses of the worlde and Tyrannes, which studie to stop the course of the gospel. For Christe lyueth styll, which from hygh derideth the counsellers of them, and whose spirite bloweth where he wil, and is not ruled at mens pleasure.

Psalm. 2.

Clouen
tongues, as
they had ben
of fire.

Thirde, there appeare clouen tongues as it were of fire, which when they were settled vpon the heades of eche of them, they were all fylled with the holy ghoſte. We sayde the wynde was a token or signe of the holpe ghoſte. But here commeth a viſible ſigne alſo of the preſence of the ſpirite, that there myght be no doubt at all thereof. For this is the maner and trade of God, to declare by outwarde tokens, the inwarde and ſpirituall giſtes, which are conceyued by fayth only, and haue their beyng in the mynde. The which by reaſon of the propoſition and infallible truth of God, wherof they are ſignes and ſeales, be to be called after the names of the thinges that they ſignifie. By this meanes it commeth to paſſe that Luke reaſonynge of the tongues which ſate vpon the Apoſtles heades, ſo ſpeaketh of them as though the ſpirite him ſelfe had ſyt on their heades. But it is euident that theſe tongues were neither eſſentially the holy ghoſt, nor yet had the holy ghoſt included in them. For who wyl ſay the ſubſtaunce of the holy ghoſt is of fire, except any man liſt to dote with the Perſians, which worſhipped the fire as a God. Who alſo wyl thinke the holy ghoſt whiche pierceth through all thinges, and whom the ſcripture teacheth to be euery where preſent, can be incloſed in ſo ſmall a thyng, as a tongue? Beſydes, Luke ſaith not that the holy ghoſt ſate on their heades, but that their mindes were fylled with the holy ghoſt. And the holy ghoſt ſhoulde in bayne ſyt vpon our crownes, onleſſe he entred into our mindes & ſhewed forth his power and efficacie. Therfore the tongues were tokens of the preſence of the holy ſpirite, neither coulde the name of holy ghoſte for any other cauſe be applyed to them, than by reaſon of propoſition and ſimilitude that is betwene them, as euen now we ſayde.

Furthermore, as in all other ſignes whiche God accuſtometh to be, there is perceaued to be a great lykenelle with the thinges that they ſignified:

fied: so here also the presence of the spirite, coulde by no other signe haue bene more evidently and properly expresse. The lykenesse of tongues was most agreeable with the Apostles office, whom God had appoynted to be preachers. The diuision of the same tongues represented the gift, which they chiefly had neede of, because they must beare witnesse of Christe in all Countries, and be vnderstanded of all men. And the element of fire signified, that the voyce of the Apostles shoulde be effectuous through the working of the spirite. For by this the spirite as by a bright brenning fire, consumeth all the thinges in vs that are carnall and earthly. By the same, the spirite kindleth the myndes of men with the loue of heauenly thinges, that leauing all earthly thinges behinde them, they may aspire to the onely eternall goodes of the heauenly kingdome. With this the holy ghost warmeth men that are benumbed with sinne, and maketh them meete and nimble to all good workes, and to doe all thinges in Christe. And this feruencie and fierie zeale is the proper marke of them, which are led with the spirite of Christ: Which spirit who so euer feeleth to be quenched in him, let him cease to glorie in the spirit. I coulde here rehearse diuers other effects of Christes spirite, but that there is more commodious place to speake therof in the sermon folowynge, where it shall be declared what the spirite wrought in the Apostles. Let vs acknowledge the truth and goodnesse of Christ, wherby he would thus provide for his Church. And let vs prepare our selues after the ensample of the Apostles, that we also may be endued with the spirite of Christe, and enflamed with the holye loue of God, that being founde stoute in the duties of Christian life, we may be taken for the true childe of God, and Coheires of Iesus Christ, to whom be blessing, honour, glorie and power for ever. Amen.

The eleuenth Homelie.

AND they began to speake with other tongues, euen as the same spirite gaue them vtterance. There were dwellyng at Hierusalem Iewes deuout men out of euery nation of them that are vnder heauen. When this was noyed about, the multitude came together, and were astonied, because that euery man hearde them speake with his owne language. They wondred all, and marueyled, saying among themselues: Beholde, are not all these which speake of Galiley. And howe heare we euery man his owne tongue, wherein we were borne. Parthyans and Medes, and Elamytes, and the inhabiteurs of Mesopotamia and of Iurie, and of Capadocia, of Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, of Egypt, and of the parties of Lybia, which is beside Syren, and straungers of Rome, Iewes, and Profelytes, Greekes and Arabyans: we haue hearde them speake in our owne tongues the great workes of God. They were all amazed and wondred, saying one to another, what meaneth this? Other mocked saying. These men are full of newe wine.



Although the promises of our Lorde and saviour Iesus Christe, were first made to the Apostles, and may seme to belong to them onely. Yet is it manifest that the same are generall, and to be extended to all them that doe beleue. For as the Apostles, because of their imperfection, and other faultes, had neede of the holy ghost, and with-

The gift of
tongues.

out the helpe of him, could not discharge the office committed to them: euen so we haue neede of the same spirite, bicause if we be destitute of him, we can neither order our life christianly, nor holde the certainty of faith against the temptations of Satan. Therefore y^e consideration of this present hystorie no man ought to thinke either vnprofitable or superfluous, which both strongly mainteyneth the auctoritie of the Apostolike doctrine, & also instructeth vs many other wayes: for it teacheth vs howe we shoulde prepare our selues to receiue the spirite, & how we shoulde iudge the spirites. As touching y^e first, was spokē yester day. The other may be learned by this presēt place. For Luke goeth on in y^e discription of the hystory, & declareth the effectes of the holy ghost, which he wrought aswel in the Apostles, as in their hearers.

And beginnyng with the Apostles, he attributeth two thinges vnto them, which they receyued by the operation of the holy ghost. The first is that by and by after they had receyued the holy ghost, they began to speake with straunge & diuers tongues. This is so great & wonderful a myracle, as I know not whether euer there happened a greater amongst men. For who is ignorant how much labour and industrie is required euen from our childhood, to learne diuers tongues: We see that men growen in yeres, are scarce able to learne any one tongue, and the perfect vse thereof. But the Apostles, men of ripe yeres and well stricken in age beyng, idioles and vnlearned, which had spent their childhood and youth not in the studie of learning, but in handy occupacions, euen in a moment, became notable and excellent in the knowledge and vse, not of one tongue, or two, but of all tongues at once. Who here acknowledgeth not the eident worke of God? Who reuerenceth not the operation of the holy ghost? For what coulde the industrie, or dexteritie of mans wyt, haue done in so short a tyme?

Neither was this myracle superfluous, as seruing only for bare and vayne ostentation (as the thinges done by Juglers are) but very profitable and necessarie for the Apostles, in discharging of their dutie and office. For where Iesus Christe had appoynted them to be teachers of all the worlde, that through their ministerie, the doctrine of the Gospell might be published among all nations: it was necessarie, they shoulde be vnderstanded of all nations. But howe coulde all men vnderstande them, if they coulde haue vsed but their owne tongue onely, in euery place? Yea I thinke they founde no greater lacke hitherto in their office, than that they perceyued themselves destitute of so necessarie a knowledge of tongues. And so great was the incommoditie of the diuersitie of tongues, which the bolde enterpryse of mans pryde (as Moyses sheweth) brought in: that by meanes hereof it seemed the most wholesome doctrine of the Gospell was hyndred, and the passage thereof into diuers nations stopped. But God in one sounde, taketh away all this impediment and stoppell, and the Apostles euen in the first comming of the spirite, feele themselves eased of that difficultie, which was thought woulde much haue hurt them. Hereof may be learned a common and generall comfort, that none walking in the vocation of God, dispayre of his helpe & fauour. God bleth to cast many thinges in the wayes of such, which seeme to be impedimentes, wherby they can not go through with their charge and calling. But God meaneth not so much to hinder them, as to trye their faith and patience. Therefore it behoueth vs with constant faith, and good courage, to set on the thinges that passe

mans

mans strength, and we shall finde God true and faithfull in the things that seeme impossible to vs to be brought to passe. So neither banishment, nor stuttyng tongue coulde let Moyles, from bringyng Israell out of Egypt: yea when the red sea was in their way, and stopped their passage, whyle they followed Gods callyng it was taken out of their way, and dyled bp. I passe ouer infinite examples of lyke sort, which are to be sene euery where, aswell in holy, as prophane hystories. Whosoouer therfore are appointed teachers or magistrates to gouerne the people, let them remember these thinges, & take vnto them good courage of minde. Let priuate men also be mindefull of them, and go forwarde with like constancie in their vocation. For God wyll finishe the worke he hath begunne in vs, so that we repent vs not of the labour that must be taken for his sake.

Let vs also marke in this place, howe Christ Iesus which chose ydiores and vnlearned men to be Apostles, woulde not giue them license, to preach abroad in the worlde, tyll he had made them perfect, and learned in all thinges partyning to the office of preachyng. For they which a litle before, vnderstode none but the Syrian tongue, and not that neither so perfectly, but by the pronuntiation (as appeared in Peter) they were taken for Galileans: they nowe come forth furnished with the knowledg of all tongues. Besides theract vnderstanding of the olde Testament, which the same spirite taught them, as appeareth by their sermons. This condemneth the insolent barbarousnesse of the Anabaptistes, that step from the Plough, and Cart vnprepared into the Pulpit, and then thinke themselves very Apostolike felowes, when beyng destitute of all good learnyng and manners, they can confut all kinde of knowledg, and peruerter the whole order of the Church. But so farre are they from beyng defended by the Apostles example, that rather the auctoritie thereof, sendeth them to learne the thinges, that are needefull for a minister of the worde. Paule certes would haue the Rector of the Church, to be instructed with habilitie, and sufficiencie to teache, and requireth in him, not the bare knowledg of the Articles of faith and saluation only, but such a knowledg, as wherby he may be able to confute the aduersarie. Therefore he commaundeth Timothie whom he witneseth, was brought bp of a childe, in the studie of the scripture, to be diligent in readyng. We confesse in dede, there is no neede of all those tongues now, which the Apostles by myracle vnderstode: nor it becommeth vs not, to require the same of God, who if he had neede of newe Apostles, coulde both easily finde them, and also furnishe them with marte giftes. But we require chiefly the knowledg of those tongues, without the which, the booke of holy scripture can not commodiously and sufficiently be declared: I meane the Hebrue and the Greke tongues, the one haunyng the olde Testament written in it, and the other the newe Testament, published by the Apostles. And Paule in a certayne place saith, that the chiefe vse of tongues is, in the interpretation of the holy scripture. Which thinges whosoouer lacketh, he shall neuer attayne to the certayne knowledg of holy scripture. For whyle they depende vpon other mens interpretations, they become lyke vnto those that see with other mens eyes, heare with other mens eares, and go with other mens fete. There is needefull to the vnderstanding of these tongues, the knowledg of hystories, and specially the science of vtteraunce, which whosoouer lacketh, certes, I will say,

The Apostles are not licensed to preach till they were well instructed.

1. Tim. 3.
Titus. 1.

1. Cor. 14.

Schooles.

Amoz. 2.

Ruffinus in
the Eccles.
hystorie, the
first booke
and chapter.The holpe
ghost chaun-
geth oure
tongues, and
teacheth
them.

Rom. 1.

he shall doe very little good in the ministerie of the Church.

But bicause all these thinges are not bestowed vpon men myraculously, and that that we reade chaunced here to the Apostles, happeneth to fewe others, therfore our industrie, our labor, and continuance in studie is requisite, where we may both perceyue howe necessarie Schooles and Uniuersities are, and also, howe needefull it is to haue teachers to trayne bp youth for the ministerie of the worde. And I thinke there is none ignorant, what a speciall care was had alwaye of schooles amongst the people of God. For hereunto is to be referred, all the things written of the children of the Prophets, and of the Colledges, wherof the holy Prophets Samuel and Elizeus had the rule and gouernance, with great care and diligence. And in the Prophete we reade howe they are greuously reprehended which went about with dissolute manners and conuersation, to corrupt the younge men, appoynted for the ministerie of the Church. Truly the godly Princes in tymes passed, perceyued of what profite it was, for the setting forth and maynteyning of religion, to haue Schooles duely and truly appoynted, who for the preservation and continuance of them, thought good to prouide for them, both by their counsaile and auctoritie, as appeareth easely by the foundations of most auncient Colledges: Which after they had degenerated, that they were become the dennes of ydle men, giuen to the throte and belly, or of pieuishe superstitious: then sprong therof the horrible ruine and decaye of the Church. Which Iulian the Apostata, a subtyll and craftie man, well forespyed, who for this cause commaunded that the Christians should be kept from learning, that through ignorance and lacke of knowledge, the subtyltie and mockerie of Philosophie, might take place. Therefore if Christian Princes wyll not be taken for folowers and fellowes of Iulian, let them knowe that the prouidyng and caryng for Schooles, belongeth to them principally.

But let vs retorne to the Apostles, who we sayde erewhyle were instructed with the gift of tongues by the holy ghost. For although this seemeth to haue come to passe in the Apostles onely: Yet is it further to be extended: For this is alway the effect of the holy ghost, to chaunge and instruct the tongues of the beleuyng. For bicause the naturall man perceyueeth not the thinges belongyng to the spirite of God: therefore he can not reason of them as mæte is. And as often as he goeth about to dispute of diuine matters, so often he bewrapeth his follie and infancie, which thing chaunced to the gentile Philosophers, as Paule saith. Besides, that man is delighted in banitie, and reioyareth in filthy talke, and oftentymes giueth the bridle of his tongue to blasphemie, as euery daye may be seene in the dayly communication of the children of this worlde.ouer and besides these mischiefes, he cannot speake, no not when he would be taken for most religious. For when he goeth about by prayer to craue the helpe of God, his mynde is pulled away either by vayne thoughtes, or else he is troubled with the conscience of his sinnes, that he can not pray with sure affiaunce of mynde, and the prayer that is without faith can not auayle. But the spirite of Christ remedyeth all these faults. For where he regenerateth the mindes of men, and powreth into them the true knowledg of the mysteries of saluation: he maketh vs able to reason of the nature of God, of his wyll, and of his iudgementes. And the tongues which were bled to blasphemie,

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backbiting, raylyng, peritrie, filthie talke, and all kinde of vncleanness, he loseth them to prayse God & to giue him thanks, and maketh them speake those thinges that set forth the glorie of God, and serue to the edifying of other, & to abstayne from those thinges that corrupt good maners. Againe, bicause he is the spirite of adoption, and beareth witnesse, that we certaynly be the sonnes of GOD. He is the aucthour that we dare call vpon GOD the father, and distruste his good wyll and fauour no longer. And Paul expresseth this effect of the spirite, saying: You haue not receyued the spirite of bondage to feare any more: but you haue receyued the spirite of adoption, whereby we crye Abba, Father. And againe: Bicause you are sonnes, God hath sent the spirite of his sonne into our heartes crying: Abba, Father. Whereunto the large promises of Christ are to be referred, that promise them that pray to his father in his name to be hearde. This spirite lykewise withstandeth the cogitations of the flethe, and enflameth the minds, as they are praying with the desire of saluation & glory of God. Besides that, the spirite of Christ worketh here a newe myracle: for as he deuided the tongues of the Apostles, that they might be able to speake the languages of all nations: so he giueth to the faithfull of all nations, one and the same tongue, whereby in all partes of the worlde, they inuocate one and the same father, with one and the same sounde, and with one and the same faith. And so those tongues be knit againe in one, which the insolent and bolde presumption of man had deuided in sunder. And this seemeth to me to be that tongue of Chanaan which the Prophete sayde the Cities of Egypt, and all nations should speake.

And if the holy ghost chaunge the tongues of men so that he maketh them to speake the thinges that are holy and godly, and which edifie many, and make them with sure confidence to aske helpe of God: then it easely appeareth with what spirite they are led, with bitter blasphemies, and cur-linges with open mouth, which breath out the poyson of slander, and cursed speaking, which offende the mindes of many, with their impure and filthy talke, hauing no regarde, neither of age nor sere, and which in prayer are either altogither colde, or else inuocate creatures, and are not afrayde to ascribe to them, the glory due to God alone, or else are boye of that sure trust and affyaunce, which they shoulde call vpon God with. For these are not the effectes of that holy spirite, but of that maligne and vncleane spirite. And Christ saith, The mouth speaketh of the aboundance of the hart. Therefore the hartes of suche are vndoubtedly possessed of the vncleane spirite of Sathan. Christ therefore doth not without a cause confesse, that we shall either be iustified or condemned by our sayinges. And David among the preceptes of lyfe, numbzeth this very grauely as the chæfe: Kepe thy tongue from euyl, and thy lippes that they speake no guile. Adde hereunto, that Paul the Apostle commaundeth all scurrilitie of tongue and filthy communication to be farre from the mouthes of Christians, and numbzeth filthynesse of speache in that roule, for the which the wrath of God commeth vpon the chidren of disobedience. Let Christian men therefore haue this prayer of David often in their mouth: Set a watche O Lorde before my mouth, and keepe the doore of my lippes.

Let vs consider the other effect of the holy ghost, in the Apostles, which we may gather of the whole context of the storie. The same is a bolde con-

Röm. 8.
Galat. 4.

Iohn. 14.
& 16.

Esay. 19.

Against blas-
phemers and
filthy tal-
kers.

Math. 15.

Math. 12.

Psal. 34.

Ephes. 4. 5.
Collos. 3.

Psal. 141.
The holpe
ghost maketh
men bolde in
the confession
of Christ.

fession

cession of Iesus Christ, deuoyde of all feare. For they begyn openly, euery where to preach him to euery one that they meete, & with diuers languages they set forth the great workes of God, as they that hearde them beare witness. For they call the preaching of Christ or the Gospell, *μεγαλα τς θες*, that is, the great and wonderous workes of God: bicause that in Christe, the whole maiestie of God is most euidentlye, of all other thinges seene. And although there are many workes of God, whereby he sheweth vs his nature and power: yet amongst them all this worke that Christe did is the chiefest. For in him the rigour of Gods iustice was seene, who would not haue his owne sonne spared, to thende our sinnes shoulde be purged with due punishment. This also declareth the vnspeakeable fauour and mercie of God, wherewith he so tenderly loned vs, that he had rather see his owne sonne dye on the crosse, than that we all shoulde be condemned. Herein also appeareth the infallible truth of God. For he that would not then deceyue vs, when his sonnes lyfe was in hazarde, howe shoulde he deceyue vs in other thinges. This commendeth to vs besides, the inuincible omnipotencie of God, which being couered with vile and mortall fleshe, was able to vanquish Sathan, and all his power, together with sinne, death, & the gates of hell. This is an argument of his vnsarcheable wisdom, whereby he coulde inuent such a remedie for the redeemyng of mankynde, which both serued to set forth the mercie of God, and also satisfied the rigour of Gods iustice. To conclude, whosoever well marketh the thinges that fell out in Christe, he hath evidently perceyued the maiestie of God, as farre forth as the same may be perceyued of vs, lyuyng in this prison of the fleshe. Therefore the Apostles are truly sayde, to haue set forth the great wonders of God, when they preached Christ.

Nowe this other effect of the holy ghost is to be extended to all true beleuers. For as the Apostles which forsooke Christ not many dayes before, by reason of feare, and kept themselues close for feare, with the doores shut about them, as soone as they were endued with the holy ghost, laying all feare asyde, begyn to preach Christ openly, and in that Citie that shed his blood, and where Christes greatest enemies bare all the rule, and feared not the multitude which was thither gathered: so whosoever that spirite inspireth, he so boldneth them and freeth them from feare, in the confession of Christ, that they thinke it their duetie to be onely occupied in setting forth the glorie of Christ, neither will they yelde to any man, which shal go about either by worldly entisementes, or threates, to bring them from their purpose. It becommeth vs to labour for this gift of the spirite, with all our possible power, since it is euident, that confession by no meanes can be separated from true faith. For it is the saying of Christ: Whosoever shall confesse me before men, him will I also confesse before my heauenly father. And agayne: Whosoever shalbe ashamed of me and of my words, before this adulterous and sinfull generation, him shall the sonne of man be ashamed of, when he shall come in the glorie of his father with the holy Angels. Out of the which wordes, Paule toke this saying of his: To beleue with the heart iustificieth, and to acknowledge with the mouth maketh a man safe. These sayinges the triflers of these dayes ought well to obserue, which accompt the confession of faith, amongst thinges indifferent, as though it were sufficient to haue faith in the heart, and no further utteraunce of it to be required. These

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Math. 10.

Mark. 8.

Rom. 10.

men boast of their fayth, but they are bitterly ignoraunt of the force and propertie thereof. For the holy ghost is of necessitie ioynded with fayth, which neither is idle himselfe, nor suffereth those whom he enspireth to be idle. And bicause he kindleth the mynde with the loue of Christe, men beyng led forth with that loue, seeke Christ onely, haue him onely in their mouth, and folowe him onely through fire and water, as they say: therefore it were an absurde thing, that they shoulde deny the name of Christ, and fayth in him which haue talked of his spirite. And yf these mens iudgement shoulde preuaile, then myght we iustly accuse all the Martyrs of follie and madnesse, which offered themselves to most cruell torments, wheras by dissembling, they myght (as these men woulde) haue escaped them. Howe much better dyd Iulianus souldiers, who perceyving that through the craft of the Emperour, they had vnawares burned incense to the goddes, published openly howe through ignoraunce they had erred and blemished fayth, and thought best to defende the glozie of Christe, which they seeme to haue preiudiced through error with sufferynge of death. But these our hygh wytted men, thinke it a matter worthy pardon and commendation, yea to be the greatest poynt of wisdom, through their craftie dissimulation, to treade downe the fayth of Christ. Surely it were better they were altogether key colde, since they wyll not be whot. But bicause they are but warme, God wyll spewe them out of his mouth.

Nowe where we haue hytherfo spoken of the Apostles, and of the things which the holy ghost wrought in them: it is mete at length we come vnto the thynges that happened among the hearers of the Apostles, of whom Luke saith there was a great multitude by and by gathered together. There are many nations reckened, and they diuers, and far re distant one from an other, which maketh for the setting forth of the myracle, forasmuch as amongst so farre distant nations, there coulde be no affinitie of speache or language. To speake of the names, situation, originall manners of these nations, is not my meanyng in this place, bicause they may most commodiously be learned out of the Geographers, booke, & tables. And of them all, it is sayde in generall, that they were amazed and astonied at this myracle, and bolde speache of the Apostles. This is a thyng commonly scene where the Gospel is preached. For both good and bad are afrayde at the preaching thereof. But this is an wholesome feare and amazednesse, bicause they giue eare and gladly embrace the doctrine of saluation. The wicked also are afrayde, but their feare endeth in a beastly kynde of goddinesse and dullnesse, which afterwarde they go about to put away with wicked scoffes and mockeries. In this place we haue examples of both these kindes of amazednesse, bicause Luke writeth that both kyndes of these hearers were present. Therefore we wyll say somewhat of eche of them.

First it is sayde there were certayne godly and deuout men present, beyng Jewes borne, but dwellyng dispersed among diuers nations. For it is euident by histories, that there were diuers occasions of the Jewes dispersion in the captiuitie of Babylon, and from thence hytherwarde. For the greatest part of them remainned amongst the Assyrians, and would not vse the libertie graunted them by Cyrus to retorne home. Those that returned home, the rage of Antiochus caused to scatter, and the tyrannie of others, of whome we omit to speake any further. In the meane season, they that

were

Sozomenus in
the Hystorie
Tripetite, the
booke sixt,
and thirde
Chapter.

Apoca. 3.

The hearers
of the Apostles,
were of
all Nations.

Godly and
religious
hearers.

E say. 1. 10.
Rom. 10.

Prouerb. 2.
Math. 7.

Scoffers,
Dogges, &
Dogges.

2. Cor. 2.
1. Cor. 1.

were most deuout, bled to come to Hierusalem at the feast dayes, to be present at the sacrifices and holy assemblies instituted of God, by the ministerie of Moyfes. Of which number there was not a fewe comen together, to whom Luke ascribeth the prayse of godlynesse and religion, because they bled godly meditations in the promises and preceptes of God, and looked for the promised sauour of the worlde, with constant hope and trust. This is a great argument of Gods goodnesse, which amongst the Jewes scattered here and there by reason of their sinnes, woulde reserue some remnantes of his elect to be saued, as he long before prophesied by his Prophet. And of these he bringeth not a fewe to Hierusalem, euen this day, that the holy ghost is giuen to the Apostles, that among the first they might be wonne vnto Christ, by the preachyng of the Apostles, as about the ende of this Chapter we shall heare. Nowe these men are astonied and wonder at the great myracle of God, which they see shewed in the Apostles, and they extoll it with many wordes, leauyng out nothyng that maketh to the setting forth of the same. For they both confesse the Apostles are Galileans, and they beare witnesse they heare euery one their owne proper phrase of speache, and they also reckon by the nations, whose tongues they heare them vse. Yet they stande not styll in this bashement, but goyng further, they seeke the ende and vse of this matter: saying: What meaneth this? We are taught by the example of these men, who are more hearers of the doctrine of the Gospell, and in whom this doctrine bringeth forth worthy frutes. They are such which beyng not wholly destitute of religion, doe humbly marueyle at the myracles of God, and sticke not onely in the outward contemplation of them, but earnestly thinke of the ende and vse of them. God suffereth not these mens studies to be frustrate, whose pleasure it is, that men shoulde come to the knowledge of truth. And we reade that Salomon sayde: If thou seekest after wisdome as after money, thou shalt finde hir. And Christ saith: Seeke and you shall finde.

Now after these men follow another sort of men, whom Christ calleth by the name of Dogges and Swine, and the scripture in other places calleth them scorners and mockers. For Luke saith, there were aswel that mocked the Apostles, as those that wondred at them, saying: These men are full of newe wine. The example of these men is set forth, to shewe vs howe farre the wickednesse of such runneth, as haue once purposed to persecute the truth. For they become incurable, and can be reclaymed with no maner of wordes or dedes. For with what myracle wyl they be moued, whom this myracle can not moue, which was the greatest that euer was wrought amongst men. But they are so farre from being moued therewith, that they take occasion rather to reproche and blaspheme it, and they attribute it to the detestable vice of drunkennesse, which of force they perceyue to be the working of the holy ghost. There are diuers examples of this sort apparant, which serue all to this ende, to teache vs that we be not offended with the vnjust iudgements of this worlde, concernyng the truth. For this is alway sene, that the doctrine of the Gospell is to some the sauour of lyfe vnto life, and to other some the sauour of death vnto death. And Paule teacheth vs, that Christ crucified, is a stumbyng block vnto the Iewes, and foolishnesse vnto the Greekes. Therfore let vs leaue such to the iudgement of God, and let vs frame our selues to the doctrine of the Gospell, that it beyng quickened

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ned in our heartes by the woorkyng of the holy ghost, may bryng forth woorthy frutes by the which we may be knowne to be true belæuers, and may enioy the euerlastyng promises of the Gospell in Jesus Christe, to whome be blessing, honour, power and glorie for euer. Amen.

The .xij. Homelie.

B V T Peter stepped forth with the elcuen and lyft vp his voyce and sayde: Ye men of Iewry, and all ye that dwell at Hierusalem, be this knowne vnto you, and with your eares heare my words. For these men are not drunken as ye suppose, seying it is but the thirde houre of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophete Ioel. And it shalbe in the last dayes (saith God) of my spirite, I wyll poure out vpon all fleshe. And your sonnes and your daughters shall prophecie, and your olde men shall dreame dreames. And on my seruauntes, and on my handmaydes, I wyll poure out of my spirite in those dayes, and they shall prophecie.



When Jesus Christ the sonne of God was newly borne into the worlde, and was brought by Marie his mother into the Churche, accordyng to the appoyntment of Moyse lawe: the holy and reuerende olde father Simeon, by inspiration of the holy ghost, amonge other thynges sayde: Echolde, this chylde is set to be the fall and vprisyng agayne of many in Israel, and for a signe which is spoken agaynst.

Luke. 2.

Howbeit that which is spoken of Jesus Christ may be vnderstanded of the Gospell of Christ, preached by the Apostles. For although the doctrine thereof be playne and simple, and sheweth also the true way howe to attayne to saluation: Yet shall men alwayes haue diuers iudgementes touchyng the same, and there shall be no small number of such as shall openly speake agaynst it. This dyd Esay the prophete see long agoe, who vtterynge a prophecie of Christe, and his doctrine, begynneth after this sort: Who hath giuen credence to our preaching? or to whom is the arme of the Lord knowne? The Lorde declareth the cause of all this matter, where he saith, this world can not abyde the lyght, bicause the workes therof are euyl. The scriptures also set forth many lyke examples, the ende and warnyng of all which, is, that we shoulde not be offended when the lyke happen in these dayes. Among which, this example that the Apostles proued the first day they receiued the holy ghost, and went about to administer their office, is very notable. For where they were indued with a singuler myracle, such as the lyke had neuer bene hard of tyll this day, which was the vnderstandyng of all languages, and preached Jesus Christe in diuers tongues, by reason of their hearers of diuers nations: by and by the vnconstant people were diuided into sundry and diuers opinions. For the more godly sort, wondered at the worke of God, and diligently searched after the meanyng thereof. The wicked scorers accused them of drunkennesse. So true it is that Paule saith: that Christe seemeth foolishnesse to the wise of this worlde. But bicause we spake hereof in the last Sermon, let vs haste to the explication

Esay. 53.
Iohn. 3.

The effectual
operation of
the holy ghost

of this present place, where the fayth and courage of the Apostles is more clærely and euidently to be sene. For they are so litle moued or feared with the wicked flanders of men, & Peter rather taketh occasion hereof, to speak vnto them, and with a fruitfull sermon winneth many of them vnto Christ.

Before we go about to expounde Peters Sermon, let vs consider what is sayde of hym, and the other Apostles. Peter (sayth he,) standyng with the eleuen, lyft vp his voyce. They stode therefore without feare, and thought neither to flye, nor leaue their charge, although they were so vniustly iudged. And yet there seemed no small cause of feare and desperation. For what shoulde they thinke they coulde preuaile in wordes with them, whose wicked and frowarde mindes, so great a myracle as euer was wrought, could not mollifie and moue? But they stode vnfeared, and not onely remayne and tary by it, but also begyn to set forth Gods quarrell and cause with great boldenesse. Therefore by their example we may see howe effectually the operation of the holy ghost is. For they which not long before vsed handy craftes and occupations, being rude and vnlearned men, are now able to abyde the sight of such a multitude, and the diuers clamours of so vnruly a sort, with constant courage. And those whom before, euery lyght occasion made so afrayde, that they durst not professe the name of Christ, before a fewe of rascall segons: do now defend his quarrell most stoutly before a great assembly gathered together of euery nation and degree: neither lacke they for the handes of tormentours to make them confesse the truth, but offer themselves freely to defende the same. Learne hereof howe we must trye and proue whether the spirite of Christ raigne in vs yea or no. For vnlesse this zeale and stoute courage to defende Christ and his truth be sene in vs: We shall in vayne boast of his spirite. And yet now a dayes, amongst those that most bragge of his spirite, it is thought a commendable thyng for a man to stop his eares at the horrible blasphemies of wicked men, vttered agaynst Christ and the truth of his Gospel, as if they were but Sirenes songes. The Apostles shewe themselves in this place to be farre other maner of men, amongst whome, Peter moued but with a very lyght taunt or quip (as it myght seme) begynneth with bolde speache to defende Christes cause and the Gospels.

The Apo-
stles take
themselves
for equals
and felowes.

Further, it is not lyghtly to be passed ouer, howe Peter is saide to stande with the eleuen. This is an euident argument of equalitie, which the Apostles diligently conserued among themselves. For where Christ put them all but in one office, which they (now hauyng receyued the holy ghost) better vnderstode then before: all that most vayne contention about superioritie, wherewith before they were enflamed, is vtterly quenched. Therefore Peter sitteth in no throne alone by hym selfe, the other standyng about him, as his seruautes and garde. He is not separated from the other, but ioyned together with them, and sheweth euidently that he is but one of their number. And although he alone make the oration, yet he defendeth not his owne cause, but the common case of them all: so that herein Peter myght seme rather the minister of the residue, than the prince and chiefe of them. Away therefore with them that by Peters example, challenge a supremacie to themselves in the Church, and are puffed vp with pride of the Persians. Christ gaue his Apostles example of humilitie, which to followe, it becometh all Christian men, much more then whome he hath appoynted to be

Sheepe.

Shæpeheardes of his Church. Hereunto is to be referred that place of Paule, which vsing great obtestations, bygeth this one thyng, that they that will be accompted the ministers of Christ, must seeke after vnanimitie, and for humilitie, which is the mother thereof. Let nothyng be done (saith he) through contention or vayne glorie, but in meekenesse of mynde: let euery man esteeme another better than himselfe. Looke not euery man on his owne things, but euery man on the thinges that are other mens. Let the same mynde be in you that was also in Christ Iesu. **See the place to the Philippians the seconde Chapter.**

But let vs consyder Peters sermon, in which, the effect and power of the holy ghoſt shall more clearly appeare. The begynnynge hereof is neither affectate nor ambitious. For the doctrine of the truth is simple, and hath no neede to be commended with baynnesse of wordes, forasmuch as it commendeth it selfe sufficiently, in that it teacheth vs most playnely the way of saluation. Wherefore Peter only calling vpon the men whome he purposeth to speake vnto, saith: Yee men of Iurie, and all yee that dwell at Hierusalem, be this knowne vnto you, and with your eares heare my wordes. He bleseth the name of Ieſus to admoniſhe them both of their auncient glorie, and of their duetie. For God in tymes passed had choſen them, and made them Ichudim, that is Confessours, by whom he woulde be celebrated and worshipped. Wherevpon in some place it is sayde: God is knowne in Iurie. For the same cause he maketh mention of Hierusalem, which is often tymes called the holy citie, to shewe them that they ought to be moued euen with the holynesse of the place, to listen diligently to the thinges which appertayne to the glorie of God, and to their owne saluation. For he is not content to be hearde onely by the way, as of men that are otherwyse occupied, but diligently, and wyl haue it layde bp in their myndes. His oration consisteth of two partes. The first answereth the slander of the wicked scoffers, which accuse them of drunkennesse; a thyng which first of all becommed to be put away, because their sayings should haue bene of no authoritie or credite, yf they had bene taken for drunkardes and blowboldes. The other part preacheth Ieſus Chriſte, and comprehendeth all the order of mans saluation.

We are taught by example of the first, that it is lawfull to make answer vnto slanders, and to defende the honestie of our name and fame, agaynst slanderers and detractours. For as Salomon saith: A good name and honest report is to be preferred before much riches. It behoueth them specially which are in the ministerie to haue a regard thereof, because the slanders whereby their name and estimation is impayred, doeth not so much touch their owne persons, as God himselfe, to whose contempt they specially tend: which was the cause that the Apostle would haue a Bishop to haue the commendation of those that be abrode also. How much more ought he to take heede, that he be not contemned of those he hath the charge of. But because the naughtinesse of many goeth so farre, that they are not ashamed to charge the holy Ministers of God with false crymes, for that they may the more easily make the doctrine of truth to be hated, and suspected: therefore excusations and purgations of themselves be both necessarie and lawfull. For we reade that Christ many tymes bled them, thereby to bring his doctrine out of contempt. And Paule not so few tymes as one, plenti-

The argu-
ment of Pe-
ters sermon.

Pſalm. 76.

Chriſtians
ought to put
away slan-
der, and to
defende their
good name.
Prou. 22.

1. Tim. 3.

fully and copiously disputeth against his aduersaries, touching his Apostleshippe, his calling, and truth which he vsed in the same: because he sawe he coulde not be contemned, but his preaching of the Gospell also must grow out of regarde in the mindes of very many. Therefore Peter beginneth his oration very well with purging of the crime, thereby to bring the Apostles out of all suspicion. Neyther are they to be regarded which in such case require sufferance. For Christian patience letteth not but that we may defende Christ and his truth to the uttermost. And they that be of this opinion, to thinke all the slanders that are ioyned with contempt of the Gospell, ought to be passed ouer as though we heare them not, deserue neyther the name of pacient nor modest men, but are to be counted rather warminlings, and cowardly forsakers of the standing, and place that they are set in.

Howbeit in putting away the crime, he neyther vseth a bare deniall onely, nor waywardly retorteth slander for slander, but proueth by arguments that it is false, that they layde to theyr charge. The first argument he taketh of circumstance of the time. These be not (sayth he) as ye suppose drunken, for it is but the thirde houre of the day. For the auncient fathers vsed to account twelue howers in the day, as may be gathered by the hystorie of the Gospell, and prophane wyters also. And because they beganne theyr count from the day spring or rising of the sunne, this thirde hower must be referred to the morning, and with vs in the summer time, it may be called seauen or eight a clocke in the forenoone. Peters argument therfore is of this sort. They that are giuen to drunkennesse begin to banquet and bouse toward eueuing, or the beginning of the night: But where it is nowe but morning, we cannot of right be accused of drunkennesse. But O happie state of those dayes, when men might reason after this sort. For although it be credible, that manye were giuen aswell to drunkennesse, as to other vices: yet such was the honestie of that time, that it was a shame to be drunken, and those that were giuen to such drinking, were drunken (as Paule sayth) in the night, for feare of open shame. In these dayes this argument should be of small force and authoritie, where as they euery where now rule the royl, which ryse early to drinke wine. as Esay complayneth of the vsage of his dayes. Yea, there be found amongst the Princes and Magistrates, which forgetting the saying of Salomon, ryse vp betymes to banquetting, and ryot. But what speake I of Princes, seeing there be deuines, not free from this vice: I remember once, being at the Sessions Imperiall, where they went about to establishe a generall peace, and to appoynt an vniforme religion through Germanie, howe I sawe a deuine of great name and fame, yea the standard bearer of the contrarie part, that sayde he woulde not dispute of so weightie a matter when he was sober. And he was so constant of his worde, that I sawe him not so fewe tymes as once well whitted by one of the clocke. But would God there were not to be found, euen among them of our owne profession, which being infected with this publike and common euill of all Germanie, were not giuen to much to this quassling. And surely if there were none other argument apparaunt, this one were ynough, to reprove the corrupt maners of these dayes. For who can denie but the dayes of Noah, and Lot be amongst vs, where with one mouth, all men talke of their cuppes, and to be drunken, is accounted with all states, and degrees, a commendable, and an honourable matter. This vice we

may

Esay. 5.

Ecclesi. 10.

may thanke, not onely for corruption of good maners, but also for the ouerthrow of iustice and lawes, and the decay of religion, and oppression of the libertie of our countrie.

But returne we to Peters Sermon, who taketh an other argument of thinges spoken long before, to acquite the Apostles of suspition of drunkennesse. For where euen the good also might iustly meruaile, howe vnlearned men shoulde sodenly come to speake such diuers languages, and to bee expert in them, and the wicked and mockers imputed it to drunkennesse: it was needefull the truth of the matter shoulde be more openly declared. Therefore Peter teacheth, that this was the worke of the holy ghost, the sending of whome he proueth by the .2. of Ioel, to haue bene promised long before in the kingdome of the Mefsias. This Ioel prophecied in the time of Esay, and Micheas, and forewarned the people of the warres that Sennacherib should make agaynst them. And least the godly should despayre, and thinke that God had left off to care for his people any more, he comforteth them, and sheweth howe Israell shoulde not quite be destroyed, bycause the Mefsias should be bozne of that people, whome God had ordeyned to be the Saviour and redeemer of mankind, and for the more comfort of them, describeth in fewe wordes, the kingdome of the Mefsias. Which place Peter the more diligently and at large cyteth, for that he woulde accuse them of dolishnesse, and lacke of witte, which ascribed the most manifest effectes of the holpe ghost, to drunkennesse. For this was a most filthie errour, not to marke and obserue so great a benefite of God, and that promised so long agoe, and most diligently described, but to raile at it. This place giueth vs three things to consider. The first prophecieth of the plentiful and liberall pouring out of the holy ghost, which should be in the tyme of Christ. The other describeth the troublesome estate of this worlde in the kingdome of Christ, insomuch that it reckoneth by the punishments wherewith God will reuenge the vnthankfulnesse and incredulitie of the worlde. The thirde declareth the maner of saluation, and sheweth the way, howe men may escape safely all daungers. But at this present we will declare onely the first part.

This the Lorde in these wordes vttereth by the Prophete. And it shall come to passe in the latter dayes (sayth the Lorde) that I will poure out of my spirite vpon all flesh. And your sonnes and your daughters shall prophecie. And your yong men shall see visions, and your olde men shall dreame dreames. And on my seruants, and on my handmaydens, I will poure out of my spirite in those dayes, and they shall prophecie. These wordes are by themselves plaine and euident ynough, yet are they more deeply to be considered, bycause of the things comprehended in them, seruing to our instruction.

The first thing to be obserued in them is, that where the Prophete prophecieth of the kingdome of Christ, amongst the great and singuler benefites bestowed on vs by Christ, he chiefly commendeth the gift of the holy ghost. The cause thereof seemeth to me was, not for that the holy Prophete eyther was ignorant of other thinges, or despised them: but bicause next after Christ, there can nothing be giuen vs of God more excellent, than that spirite of Christ, which here is spoken of. For our heavenly father hath inclosed in Christ his sonne, all the treasures of his grace, and of our saluation. But men are regenerated by his holy spirite, to become the sonnes of God, and heires of the goodes which Christ hath purchased vs. Which re-

The place of
Ioel, second
Chapter.

The promise
of the holpe
Ghost.

The gift of
the holpe
Ghost, is the
greatest gift
that GOD
hath giuen
vs.

generation

Iohn. 3.

1. Cor. 2.

Iohn. 14.
and. 16.Rom. 8.
Galath. 4.

Math. 7.

Math. 6.

After what
saith and to
whome the
holy ghoste
is giuen.

Galath. 3.

generation is so necessarie for vs, that vnlesse we be renewed by the same, we cannot (as Christ testifieth) see the kingdome of God. The same spirite illuminateth our mindes, to vnderstande the mysteries of the kingdome of heauen, and kindleth in vs the desire of them. Without the which light, the naturall man cannot perceyue the thinges belonging to the spirite of God. This spirite is a comforter, by whome we being incouraged, are able to abide, and ouercome whatsoeuer aduersitie in this worlde, betydeh vs for Christes sake. And he doth not onely the part of a comforter, but is also a most faythfull counsaylour. For he telleth vs what to doe, and when we be in perplexitie and doubt, he lighteth vs the torch of truth, by whose conducting, we escape the daungers of fayth, and of saluation. Beside all this, he is the earnest, and sure pledge of our redemption and saluation. For as Iesus Christ taking vp into heauen the fleshe that he tooke of vs, would haue it there, to be a gage of our saluation: so he putteth his spirite in our heartes, in steede of a pledge, to imprint the confidence of saluation in vs, and to arme vs strongly agaynst temptations. Wherefore he is called of Paule, the spirite of adoption, because that being regenerated by him, we are assured by his testimonie, that we be the sonnes and heyres of God. Therefore it is not without a cause that the Prophete, taketh the gift of this holy spirite amongst all other, most to be comended. We are also here taught, what we ought chiefly to doe in the kingdome of Christ. In which place we may see the diuers and noysome errours of men, which while they followe carnall thinges onely, and vnder the coulour of Christ, gape after worldly goodes, vse many tymes to denie Christ in their life, whome they professe with their mouth. And to these shall be ioyned those, to whome hereafter it shall be sayde: Not euerie one that sayth vnto me, Lorde, Lorde, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but he that doth the will of my father which is in heauen. Christes kingdome is a spirituall kingdome, and not of this worlde. Therefore let vs desire the giftes of the spirite, wherewith if we be furnished, the other thinges that we haue neede of shall come of their owne accord.

Moreover, it is conuenient we see the maner of this promise, and to whome it apperteyneth. He declareth the maner in this one word of pouring out, whereby he promisseth a large and plentifull grace of the spirite. As touching the persons to whome he will giue it, he treateth more at large saying: I will poure out of my spirite vpon all fleshe. Therefore this is an vniuersall promise. But he addeth for expositions sake, sonnes and daughters, yong men and olde, to teach vs that there is no difference in the kingdome of Christ, eyther of age or sexe. For in Christ (as Paule sayth) there is neyther Iewe nor Gentyle, neyther bonde nor free, neyther man nor woman. In the meane season, least any might thinke that the holy spirite was giuen to good and bad alyke, God restrayneth his promise to his seruautes and handmaydens, to the ende we should vnderstande that it ought vniuersally to be expounded of them. For where he is the spirite of adoption, he can be receyued of none, but of them who God doth bouchsafe to acknowledge for his sonnes. But they be sonnes of God which acknowledge him to be their father, and call vpon him, which serue him, which worship him, which please him, and honour him. And although they cannot performe the thinges that belong to the sonnes of God, before they be regenerated, by this spirite, through the free benefit of God, (and therfore they be oftentimes vnknowne

to

to vs, before we see the effects of the holy ghost in them :) yet it is evident, that none be partakers of this spirite , but such as the Lorde taketh for his. And he knoweth who be his , and so knoweth them , that no man can take them out of his hande.

And here by the waye, commeth the difference of the olde and newe Testament to be considered. For although one and the same Christ, one and the same sayth, and way of saluation, one and the same spirite is set forth in both of them : yet there may be perceyued no little difference : wherein easily appeareth howe much greater our dignitie and felicitie is, than theirs of the olde Testament. This appeareth first in the number of the saythfull, and next in the maner of teaching. For in the olde Testament it is plaine, there were but a small number of worshippers, and the knowledg of saluation seemed to be compassed within the boundes of the people of Iurie. For the wordes of God be well knowne, which he sayth to the Israelites : Ye shall be mine owne aboue all Nations. For all the earth is mine. Ye shall bee vnto me a kingdome of priestes, and an holy people. Againe : You only haue I accepted of all the Nations on the earth. For which cause sake, me thinketh that is also spoken in the Psalmes. In Iewrie is God knowne, his name is great in Israell. At Salem is his Tabernacle, and his dwelling in Syon. Hee sheweth his worde vnto Iacob : his statutes and ordinaunces vnto Israell. Hee hath not dealt so with any Nation, neyther haue the heathen knowledge of his lawes. But in the newe Testament, the spirite of the Lorde is poured vpon all fleshe, and the way of saluation is stretched to the farthest endes of the earth. There it is sayde, that they shall come from the East, and from the West, that shall sitte in the kingdome of God with Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob. There the Apostles receyue a commaundement, to preache the Gospell to all Nations. There Peter learneth vs howe, there is no respect of persons wyth God, but in all Nations they that feare him, and worke righteousnesse, are accepted of him. And here is fulfilled that which was spoken before by the Prophete : That the barren and desolate, should haue more children, than shee that was maryed. Againe, though there be singuler examples, of the saythfull of the olde Testament, the like whereof you shall hardly finde in these dayes : yet is it plaine, that the way and meane of our saluation, is now much moze manifestly taught, than it was wont to be in the olde Testament. Before the lawe was published, there were in dede large and liberall promises, but obscure ynough, if we waye them that liued in those dayes, which saue them not as then fulfilled. In the lawe our saluation was shadowed with signes and figures, but such as whereof many tooke occasion to establishe the righteousnesse of woorkes. Then followed the Prophetes, and they declare the mysteryes of Christ, somewhere darckely, and somewhere moze plainely and openly. And the thinges which seeme to vs most evident, in their writings, seemed without doubt to them in those dayes, obscure and darke ynough. But in the newe Testament, the bayle of darcknesse is rent, and that light brought in, which being come, giueth light to all men in the worlde. In the Gospell, the thinges are plainely taught, which before tyme were hidden and secrete. And there fishers and Publicanes see and heare those thinges, which many Prophetes and iust men desired in tymes past to heare and see. As touching this plentifull and bounteous gift of the holye ghost, and true light thereof, Ioel also prophecieth. The ende and vse of all these

2. Tim. 2.
Iohn. 10.

The difference of the
olde and new
testament.

Exod. 19.
Amoz 3.

Psal. 76.
and 147.

Math. 8.

Marc. 16.

Actes. 10.

Isa. 54.

Iohn. 1.

Math. 13.

The effect of
the holy ghost
is common to
all beleeuers.

1. Cor. 14.

Esay. 11.

Hiere. 31.

Iohn. 6.
Esay. 54.

these things serue to prouoke vs to consider our dignitie, & Gods liberalitie towards vs, to celebrate the goodnesse of God, & to shew our selues thankful for his gifts, which he so merciful a lord, so bountifull hath bestowed vpon vs.

Last of all, Ioel rehearseth the effectes of the holye ghost, which are common to all them that beleue. In which place he maketh mention of propheticie, the gift whereof he sayth both yong men and olde men, sonnes and daughters shall receyue. By propheticie, we suppose ought to be vnderstanded, not so much the gift of telling things to come, as the true and certaine knowledge of the mysteries of saluation, and chiefly the vnderstanding of the old Testament, according to the exposition of Paule which is to be seene. He addeth by way of exposition, visions and dreames, because that by those meanes God vled in tymes past, to reueale his will vnto the Prophetes, as may be seene in the booke of Numbers. 12. Chap. For the Prophetes vble to set forth the mysteries of Christ, with certaine phrases of speache, such as were knowne and in vse with all men in their dayes. Examples whereof may be seene euery where of such as reade their wytyngs. So by thys worde prophecyng, he promyse the true knowledge or vnderstanding of Gods will, and that saluation that is common to all men in the kingdome of Christ, which also we read is promised in other places. Esay verily saith, that the earth shall be full of the knowledge and vnderstanding of God. And the Lorde sayth. I will plant my lawe in the inwarde partes of them, and write it in their heartes: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And from thenceforth shall no man teach his neighbour or his brother, and say: Knowe the Lorde. But they shall all knowe me from the lowest vnto the highest, sayth the Lorde. &c. And Christ out of the Prophete testifieth, that they shall bee all taught of the Lorde. Therefore the principall effect of the holy ghost, and which is common to all men, is a sure knowledge of the will of God, and an vnderstanding of saluation, and the mysteries of the kingdome of God, and (as farre as is requisite for euery man) an intelligence both of the olde and newe Testaments. By this therefore we may iudge what they be, that set naught by the knowledge of the will of God, and where they vnderstand it not of themselues, will yet be taught of no man, whome this one place may proue to want the spirite of Christ. To this may be ioyned the Lords ouer the fayth, and the Tyrantes of the Church, which driue the Christian people from the reading of the Scripture, and dare call that generall benefite of the holy ghost, which the Prophete so highly commendeth, the beginning and sēde of heresies and errours. It is our partes (brethren) to acknowledge the gift of Gods grace, and to embrace the spirite of Christ, that we being borne againe by his operation, illuminated and made meete to all good woorkes, may enioy the eternall inheritauce of the kingdome of heauen, with Iesus Christ, the sonne of God, to whome be blessing, honour, power, and glorie for euer. Amen.

The .xiiij. Homelie.

And I will shewe woonders in heauen aboue, and tokens in the earth beneath, bloud and fire, and the vapoure of smoke. The Sunne shall be turned into darcknesse, and the Moone into bloud, before that great and notable day of the Lorde come. And it shall come to passe, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lorde shall be saued.

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The Apostle Peter driueth his first sermon, which he made at Hierusalem, after he had receyued the holy ghost, to that ende, that the Apostles obserued in all their sermons, that is to say, to bring his hearers to the knowledge of Christ, and to winne them to the saluation that is in him. Which thing, that he might with the more ease, bring to passe, he by and by, in the beginning is well ware, that his doctrine be not reiect-
 ted, before it be knowne and heard. For he diligently before hande, answereth all those thinges, which might giue his hearers any cause or occasion to misjudge or suspect it. Among these there were some godly and deuout: yet more that were vngodly, vntowarde and obstinate. And the religious were holden with ignorance, so that they were astonyed at so great a myracle, and being in doubt, could not tell what to iudge or thinke of the matter. But the other were in farre worse case and taking: for wyth ca- uils and flanders they mock and delude all the meaning of the myracle, accusing the Apostles of drunkenesse, and those that hearde them, of foolishnesse. Therefore it was needefull some present remedy should be had, which he took out of the seconde Chapter of Ioel. For by that place he teacheth, that here is nothing done eyther of error or affection of man, but that all this doing is the worke of God, and promised of God long ago by the Prophets. And he is very diligent in cyting the wordes of the Prophet, bicause the place not onely serued to confute their reproche, but also greatly made for Peters purpose. This place, as I sayde in the Sermon before goyng, hath thre members or partes. The first comprehendeth the bounteous and most liberall promise of the holye ghost: The seconde describeth the troublous state of the worlde, which shoulde continue euen to the ende therof in the kingdome of Christ, and so rehearseth the punishments wherewith God woulde reuenge the contempt of his sonne, and the Gospell, which thing serued marueylously to make the Jewes afrayd, that they should not thinke they shoulde escape scot free, for confirming of Christ and his Gospell. The third sheweth the way how to auoide all these euils and mischiefes. The first part we declared yester day. It remayneth that we now set forth the two later.

And bicause I see there is a doubt and controuersie touching this great and notable daye of the Lorde, whereof the Prophet maketh mention in this place: first, it seemeth good to me to shew my iudgement concerning the same. There be that vnderstande it to be the daye of Christes resurrection, and the signes and wonders which are here prophesied should come, they expounde to be the things that happened in the death and resurrection of Christ. Surely their sense and meaning is godlye. But bicause of the prophesies of Jesus Christ, which he uttereth almost in the same wordes concerning the state of the later times, the ende of this daye is farther to be extended. Other thinke the whole time of the worlde after Christes birth is comprehended in the signification of this daye. But me thinketh the glorious and notable daye of the Lorde when he shall iudge the whole worlde, maye here be vnderstanded. For where he had made mention of the later time a little before, he sayeth the state and condicion of the time

Which, the
 great daye of
 the Lord is.

The vse of
the prophes-
cies concer-
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later dayes.

Chiliaſtes
were ſuche
as imagined
that Chriſte
and they after
the generall
doome ſhould
reigne perſo-
nally on earth
1000. yeres.

Pſal. 110.

Iohn. 18.

Iohn. 16.

Math. 24.

Marck. 13.

Luke. 21.

The ſtate of
the later dayes
ſhall be verie
troubloꝝ.

which he now describeth, ſhould continue vntill the ende of that time drew neare when Chriſt appearing in the glorie of the father, and pronouncing a finall ſentence vpon all fleſh, ſhoulde appoint a full and abſolute bliſſe to his faythfull deuoyde of all ſorowes, daungers and griefes, which they ſhoulde enioy both in body and ſoule.

It behoued therefore that this troubleſome ſtate of the worlde which ſhoulde alwayes remaine after the birth of Chriſte, and after he had fulfilled the worke of our redemption, ſhoulde be thus diligently deſcribed, leaſt any man after this great promiſe of the holye gholt, and fauour of God, ſhoulde promiſe himſelfe to haue all thinges in this worlde in peace and ſafetie, with which erroꝝ we reade the Chiliaſtes in times paſt were betwitched. And there want not in theſe dayes which hope for an vniuerſall, and ſtable peace and tranquillitie of all thinges vnder Chriſt, which becauſe they ſee not as yet come to paſſe, they beginne to ſuſpect all that is written of our faith and religion. They draw the cauſe of their errour out of the Prophets deſcriptions of the kingdome of Chriſte, ſuch as both otherwheres and alſo in Eſay. xi. and lvi. Chapters are extant. But there are other places of Scripture which ought to haue bene ioyned with them, where we are abundantly taught, that we ought to looke for no ſuch thing in this worlde. For Dauid ſayeth: Chriſt ſhall reigne in the middeſt of his enemies. And Chriſte denyeth that his kingdome is of this worlde. He euerye where admoniſheth his children of the croſſe and bitter afflictions, which he would haue them prepared for. In the worlde (ſayth he) you ſhall haue tribulation. They are therfore ridiculous in very deepe, which contrarie to Chriſtes ſaying, promiſe as well others as themſelues, eaſe, peace, and tranquillitie in this worlde. And yet we denie not the things that are read in the Prophets, touching a peaceable ſtate of Chriſtes kingdome. But we vnderſtande them partly of the tranquillitie of the minde, and of the ſpirituall ioye of the faithfull, and partly of the faithfull onely, and of the conuerſation and fellowſhip which they onely haue one with another. For ſo they be truly at reſt and certaine of their ſaluation, and dwell ſafely among them, who (where before they might haue ſeemed Woolues and Lions) being conuerted to Chriſt, are become moſt meke ſheepe and lambes. And yet manye ſtryfes and afflictions they ſhall abide, which (as Chriſte plainly admoniſheth vs) ſhall be ſo much the moze grievous, howe much nearer the vniuerſall redemption of the godly approacheth: which when he cometh ſhall be cleane diſpatched. But to come at length to the wordes of the Prophete, two thinges in them ſeeme chiefly to be conſidered, wherof one is the troubleſome and unhappie ſtate of the worlde, which he ſayth ſhould be after Chriſt his coming in the fleſhe: the other concerneth the cauſes of the euils and calamities which ſerue not a little alſo well to comfort vs, as to inſtruct vs.

He deſcribeth the ſtate of the later dayes in theſe wordes: I will ſhewe woonders in the heauens aboue, and tokens in the earth beneath, bloud and fire, and the vapour of ſmoke. The ſunne ſhall be turned into darckeneſſe, and the moone into bloude. He maketh mention of ſtraunge woonders, which becauſe they be tokens of things to come, in conſidering of them, we muſt alſo comprehend in our minde the calamities and miſeries which they portende. For it is not Gods propertie or cuſtome to delude the mindes of

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men with baine and ydle sights. And Iesus Christ in the gospel, repeating the same things, maketh mention of afflictions also, wherof these be signes and prognostications. Ye shall (saith he) heare of warres, and tidings of warres. For nation shall rise against nation, and Realme against Realme, and there shall be pestilence and hunger, and earthquakes in all places. The Prophet propo-
 neth diuers kinds of wonders, to make vs the more attent. He saith there shall be wonders in heauen, in the number whereof, blasing starres, fire-brands, flashings of light, flying Dragons, long starres like swordes and dartes, and what so euer such like maye be accounted, which although the Astrologers number amongst the things proceeding of natural causes: yet this place sufficiently teacheth vs that they be signes and tokens of calamities to followe. Furthermore he sayeth, there shall be also signes vpon the earth, amongst the which, earthquakes ought to haue the first place: whereby it is manifest great alterations of things haue many times bene portended. Herevnto appertaine the straunge inundations and ouerflowings of waters, monstrous births of children, the vncouth voice of beasts, springs of waters running with bloude, the straunge frutes of trees and plantes, with infinite others lyke, examples whereof we haue both in hystories and daily experience. But the Prophete returning agayne to heauen, maketh peculiar mention of the sunne and moone, whose brightnesse he sayth shall be obscured with horrible darknesse, and the terrible sight of bloude. The meaning of all which, is, that in the later daye such shall bee the countenance of the worlde, that whither soeuer wee turne our eyes, there shall appeare the horrible signes of Gods wrath and his iudgements, euen in those creatures, the vse whereof hath bene chiefly to sette forth the goodnesse of God, and to comfort man, amongst which, we take the sunne and moone to be the chiefe. Moreouer, if we compare the things here spoken with hystories, we shall see that all these things in sundry ages haue many wayes bene fulfilled. But what neede we runne to hystories: where in our owne dayes we haue seene many examples hereof, and may euery day still see newe. What age euer was there since the beginning of the worlde, wherein so many blasing starres haue bene seene, as hath appeared within these .xxxiiij. yeres: I speake not of speares, swordes, darts, horses, sights of men, yea armed hostes, Lyons, and many other, which hauing bene seene in the Cloudes, haue feared the mindes of the lookers on. Who knoweth not of the earthquakes and horrible inundations of waters: The monstrous birth both of men and beastes brought forth within the space of this .xxx. yeres, no man can easilye number. Bloude hath sprung out of the earth, and runne, not in so fewe places as one. We haue seene in the eares of corne marueylous and straunge sights. The bearded grapes, and clusters hauing tuftes of heare growing out of them, haue vpbraided the Germaines with their drunkennesse, as it were men strong to drinke wine, as the Prophet sayth.

Here we must learne the continuall blage of God which neuer punisheth man before he giue warning thereof by wonders, and that their seeing of these wonders should not be in baine, he ioyneth most times his worde to the same. For where he woulde haue men to be saued, he doth nothing (as the Prophete sayth) except hee reueale his secretes before, vnto his seruantes the prophetes. This may be proued by the examples of all ages, from the

Math. 24.

The vse of
wonders.

Amoz. 3.

first beginning of the worlde. Noah the preacher of righteousness went before the flood, by whose preaching the worlde might haue bene brought to repentance. Loth was sent by God vnto the Sodomites, by whose words and examples they might haue bene admonished. The Egyptians beside Moyses and Aaron sawe such horrible and monstrous tokens, that if there had bene any sense or vnderstanding in them, it might haue mollified their harts. Rachab the harlot testifieth that the Chanaanites had warning afore of the destruction to come. No man but meanly traueyled in the writings of the Prophetes, is ignorant howe many and saythfull aduertisements went before the captiuitie of Babilon. Concerning the signes and wonders that went before the last destruction of Hierusalem, and people of Iurie, Iosephus and Egesippus haue written most straunge and monstrous things. I let passe the things contained in other histories, the truth wherof was alwayes tryed by the effect falling out. By these let vs learne to knowe the goodnesse of God, and to iudge of the wonders and straunge signes of our days, least if we (like blind and deafe folke) neglecting them, be found despisers of God, and suffer grieuous punishment for our contempt.

The causes
of the trou-
blous estate
of the later
dayes.

But some man may maruell what shoulde be the cause of so vnfortunate and troublous a state, seeing the sonne of God appeared in the fleshe, to make a loue daye betwene God and vs, at whose birth the Angelles were hearde to sing: Glory be to God on high, peace vpon earth, and vnto men a good will. Where nowe God may seme more angry and more offended with the earth, than before his sonnes incarnation. Surely hereof in tymes past, the enemies of Christian profession, tooke occasion to inueigh against Christes religion: as after whose birth, a whole sea of mishaps burst into the earth, and ouerflowed all mankind: whose slaunders Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, Arnobius, and diuers of the auncient writers haue grauely and learnedly answered and confuted. Yea, we shall finde some among the professours of Christianitie, whome the consideration of these euils doth not a little dismay. Therfore to marke and search out the cause of these euils, is neyther vnprofitable nor superfluous, but two wayes to be obserued. For it is to be searched as well in the godly as the vngodly: and so it shall easily appere that the cause of these calamities is in vs, and that the Christian faith and Christ himselfe is in no fault. In the vngodly needeth no great inquisition to finde the cause, whereas they dayly commit many thinges which deserue the wrath and punishment of God. For eyther there reigneth in them the lyfe of Epicure, and a carelesse contempt of God and all holynesse, or else superstition and idolatrie. Both these engender an hatred to the truth, and stirre by persecutions agaynst the ministers of Christ, which by the light of the truth, reprove licentious living, and accuse superstition. These things reigne in our dayes, yea they swarme in euery place, that there is no man so blind but may see them, nor none so impudent that can deny the. We may heare euerywhere mockers, which (as Peter warned vs) with pety taunts can deride the day of iudgement, and call the resurrection of the deade into question, yea flatly deny it. And they that can brydle their tongues, yet with licentiousnesse of life testifie, that they are stained with the same impiety. Against these the professours of religion set themselves, but being superstitious and giuen to grosse idolatrie, they fight for their colde ceremonies, for mans traditions, for the

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painted righteousnesse of their owne woꝝkes, with no lesse vngodlynesse and waywardnesse, than the Jewes in times passed stroue for the righteousness of the lawe. Both these kindes of men consent in oppugning the truth, as once we reade the Phariseys dalied with the Herodians against Christ. And the matter is not concluded in woꝝdes and argumentes, but with chaines, imprisonments, haulter, fire, and sworde. And vngodlynesse in many places is gone so farre, that there is counted no more heynous offence, than purely to confesse Christ, and boldlye to defende the veritie of the Gospell, and the sinceritie of Christian faith. These thinges because they are daily committed, it needeth not further to search the cause of the calamities that are daily seene, considering how the same wickednesse caused Israel in times past to be led captiue to Babilon, and afterwarde vtterly to be rooted vp. Reade the second booke of Chzonicles, xxxvj. Math. 23. Luc. 19. Chap.

But I knowe (thou wilt say) the wicked are auctoꝝs of euill, and that their doinges deserue moze grienous punishmentes, than they yet feele. But what maketh this to the godlye and sincere woꝝshippers of Christ, who are wrapped in the same calamities, & whome we see are the first that feele the smart of them: Dought the impietie and frowardnesse of the vngodly to preiudice them: Howbeit we must in the godly not only consider the truth of their doctrine, sinceritie of fayth, and integritie of religion, but also the imperfection and vices which cleaue vnto them by reason of the flesh, and then it shall appeare, that they are not faultlesse, and suffer not for others faultes. For in them many times the desires of this world shew themselves, and not seldome times vnder the cloke of Christ, they seeke with the sonnes of Zebedeus their priuate honours, dignities and riches. Therfore it is necessarie that they also doe drinke of the cup of Christ, and being exercised with afflictions, learne that the kingdome of Christ is not of this worlde. Furthermore oftentimes, the godly are to bolde and confident, through securitie, whereof they slippe into many enormities, which thing (as is manifest) happened to Dauid, and manye others. Therefore it behoued that that carelesnesse and securitie should be shaken of with affliction, and with the Crosse, least they also shoulde grievously offende, or that when they had offended, they might learne to saye with Dauid: It is good for mee that I haue bene in trouble, that I maye learne thy statutes. My soule melteth away for very heauinesse, comfort thou mee according to thy worde. And because God considereth the contrite in heart, and Christ calleth them that traueyle and are heauie laden vnto him: it is necessary we be brought downe by afflictions, that when we feele our selues burthened and heauy loden, we maye go the gladlyer vnto Christe. Besides this: The seruaunt that knoweth his maisters will, and doth it not, shall be the soꝝer beaten. And if we woulde iudge or accuse our selues, we shoulde not be iudged or condemned of the Lord. But because mozte times we flatter our selues, and winke at other mens faultes, Gods iudgements are necessary, to shewe that he is no fauourer or allower of sinne. Last of all, the gloꝝie of God requireth that where he punisheth the wickednesse of the worlde, iudgement shoulde beginne at his house, as the Apostle sayth, least he might seeme to beare and allowe in his owne folke, that he seuerely punisheth in other. If we consider well these things, we shall haue no occasion to complaine or finde fault with

The godlye
also are cause
of calamities

Psal. 119.

Luc. 12.

1. Cor. 11.

1. Pet. 4.

1. Cor. ii.

The waye
how to escape
these calamities.

Rom. ic.

Saluation
consisteth in
inuocation.The maner
of inuocation.

with God. Great comfort we maye gather hereof, if we marke the difference betwixt the afflictions of the godly and vngodly. For the one, because they neyther can nor will repent, haue no ende of their afflictions, but eternall torments in hell remayne for them. But to the other, they be as the rod of a father, wherwith they are quickened to amende their liues, to be zealous in fayth, to be seruent in godlynesse, and to be desirous of Gods worde, and the ende and vse of them, is that none should perish with the vnhappy worlde. So the things that are writtten touching the troublesome state and calamities of the later times, serue for all ages. For they feare the wicked with threates, that they maye vnderstande what to hope for because of their contempt of Christ and his Gospell. And the godlye be admonished by them of their duetie, & hauing warning of his will, strengthen their myndes against the offence that riseth of such aduersitie. But returne we to the place of the Prophete.

In the thirde and last part of this place, he sheweth a remedie against these calamities, and the way how we may escape and auoyde them. And Peter would not omit that part, because the Iewes might see, that the same way of saluation in times past was shewed by the Prophetes, which he nowe preached. And this is a great argument of Gods goodnesse, which in the midst of aduersities so fauourably sheweth the way howe to auoyde them. For looke how terrible the things are which go before the state of the later dayes: so pleasant and comfortable are the things that follow after. For the Prophete sayth: And it shall come to passe that whosoeuer calleth on the name of the Lorde, shall be safe. This is a most notable and verie euangelike sentence, the which Paule also vsed to beate downe the righteousness of the lawe and of workes. And in this present place Peter taketh occasion of the same sentence, more at large to discourse of Christ. We will briefly speake of such things as are to be considered in the same.

First he sheweth that there is saluation and deliuerie by inuocation, which the Scriptures with great consent teach to be due vnto God onely. Ergo, in our selues there is no hope of saluation or deliuerie. For if there were any strength in our selues to saue vs by, it were an absurde thing to seeke saluation otherwheres. And the saluation also which is shewed vs to be in God without our selues, we cannot attayne vnto through our owne power and abilitie. For we haue neede to vse inuocation and prayer, which are due to none but to him, in whose mere kindenesse and liberalitie we put our trust. For he that is perswaded he hath deserued any thing, bleseth no intreatie or prayers, but lawe and right, in requiring those things which are due vnto him. It is manifest therefore that both saluation is to be founde in God onely, and that the same is the mere and free gift of his liberalitie, and that we must labour to obtaine the same by prayers and continuall inuocation.

This done, he setteth forth the maner howe we shoulde inuocate him, wherein manye are perplexed and much in doubt. For there be some that vnderstande well ynough how all saluation is in God onely. But they suppose by reason of their sinnes, they are debarred from the maiestie of God, and therefore eyther they abstayne altogether from inuocation, as vnprofitable and superfluous, or else they exercise it to coldely, and without faith. But to these, the Prophete proponeth not only the Lorde, but the name of the

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the Lord to be inuocated. But what name of the Lord shall we say this is? Is it any peculiar name consisting of letters and sillables, wherby (as we see in the names of other things) the nature of God, his disposition, and all his properties be comprised? I will think no man so simple, as that he supposeth the everlasting, incomprehensible, infinite and vnspeakable essence and nature of God, can be comprehended in a few of letters. Therefore that is called the name of God, after the maner of men, that setteth forth God to vs to be knowne, as farre as is possible. And hereto are to be referred whatsoeuer things are spoken of his maiestie, veritie, iustice, goodnesse, wisdom, grace, power, mercye, and all his whole nature. And because these things be moſte evidently ſeene in Chriſte onely, which is the expreſſe ymage of God the father, and the brightneſſe of his glory coeternall with him and conſubſtantiall, therfore he may well be called the name of God, in whom all inuocation ought to be made. For he was ſeene in the fleſh, and hath reuealed to vs whatſoeuer things are meete for vs to know concerning God. God alſo hath made him an Altare and propitiatory for vs, in whome we offer to him prayers, and all kinde of worſhip. To him hath God borne witneſſe from heauen ſaying: This is my beloued ſonne in whom I am well pleaſed. And by him is there an entraunce for vs vnto the throne of grace, as the Apoſtle teacheth. Therefore all that will inuocate God, are ſent vnto him, both that they might beleue God to be ſuche an one, as he is declared in Scripture to be, and alſo deſire of him to be ſaued, and hearde for Jeſus Chriſtes ſake. This reprocueth our righteouſneſſe, and teacheth vs that we are voyde of all merites before God. For if in our prayers we haue neede of anothers helpe, which (vneleſſe they be offered by Chriſte) are not allowed of God, what hope ſhall be left vs all our life after, if Chriſt be taken from vs? But bicauſe he is comprehended by fayth, it is meete our prayers ſhoulde procede of faith, and of ſuch a fayth, as certainly beleueth that we for Chriſtes ſake are accepted with God. Hereof ſprang that auncient vſage of the Church, where all prayers for the moſt part are concluded with the name of Jeſus Chriſt. For the holy fathers well knewe the ſaying of Chriſt: No man cometh to the father but by mee. Alſo this ſame doth recreate with marueylous comfort, mens myndes that are afrayde with the conſcience of their ſinnes. For although we ſee our ſelues ſuch as are vnworthy whom God ſhould doe for, and whome he ſhould mercifully heare: yet a moſt certaine and an infallible truſt riſeth in our mindes, which maketh vs to think that Jeſus Chriſt is ours, and that we ſhall be hearde of God, bicauſe of our faith in him. And this is that true inuocation which Chriſt himſelfe teacheth to conſiſt in the ſpिरite and in truth. For fayth ſpringing in vs of the holpe gholt, lea- deth our mindes and ſpirites into the contemplation of God. And bicauſe it breedeth in vs a ſure truſt of the grace of God, our prayers cannot bee feyned, but are a moſt true teſtimony of our faith and hope.

Wherefore the Prophete promiſeth vs a moſt excellent fruite in them, when he ſayth: that he ſhall be ſaued that calleth vpon the name of the Lord. Where we may note a double conſolation. Firſt it is an vniuerſall promiſe which promiſeth ſaluation to all them that call vpon the name of the Lord. Ergo, here is a doore of ſaluation opened to all men, from entring into which, we are not kept backe, neyther by pouerty, nor infamy of the world,

neyther

Iohn.1.

Math.3.17.

Hebr.4.

Iohn.14.

Iohn.4.

The fruite of
inuocation.

neither by diseases, nor cruell torments, neither by sere nor age, neither by difference of nation or kindred. Nay, we cannot be put by, neither by sinne nor death, because in Christ we haue expiation of all our sinnes, and he hath ouercome death and the gates of hell. Furthermore, saluation is absolutely promised, so that we see they haue all things necessary to saluation that call vpon the name of the Lorde. Wherebpon we gather that they which feele no taste nor comfort of saluation by their prayers, call not vpon the name of the Lorde, that is, they are destitute of faith in Christe, which faith will not suffer our prayers to be made in vaine. And this is the only way of saluation which the holy scriptures teach vs euerywhere. And Peter thought to make mention hereof in this place, to thintent the Jewes might vnderstand how they could none other wayes be deliuered from the imminent daungers, and the horrible iudgement of God, but by casting away all trust in their owne workes and righteousness, and turning vnto the throne of grace, by the faith that is in Iesus Christe. The same must we also in these dayes marke and consider. Whatsoever troubles or calamities the Lorde or his Apostles foretolde shoulde happen in the later dayes, they bge and assault vs on euery side. The wyldest and greatest men consult in euery place, how to get a waye and remedye to be saued. And the vnhappy successe of things in these dayes, teache vs howe vayne all counsailes be that procede of mans deuylse. Let vs therefore holde this waye, which as it is the most simplest and playnest, and deliuereth vs from many cares and troubles: so is it infallible and certaine, because it stayeth and resteth vpon the promise of God, which no force of the worlde can ouerturne. Wherefore, let vs acknowledge our sinnes, and in them let vs seeke the causes of the evils which we suffer. Let vs ble the acknowledging of our sinne, to beate downe the affiaunce in our owne righteousness. And then turning vnto God, let vs call vpon his holpe name, who surely will heare vs, and deliuer vs for his names sake in Iesus Christ, to whome be blessing, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The .xiiij. Homelie.

YE men of Israell heare these wordes. Iesus of Nazareth a man approued of God among you, with myracles, woonders and signes, which God did by him in the middest of you, (as yee your selues knowe) him haue you taken by the handes of vnrighteous persons, after hee was deliuered by the determinate counsell and foreknowledge of God, and haue crucified and slaine him, whom God hath rayfed vp, and loosed the sorowes of death, because it was impossible that he shoulde be holden of it.

WE haue hearde the first part of Peters Sermon alreadye, wherein he cleareth the Apostles from the crime of drunkenesse, and teacheth how they were endued with the holy ghost. He bleth in the place of demonstration, the testimony of the Prophet Ioel, which he so rehearseth, that therewith he declareth the horrible punishmentes remainning for the contemners of the Gospell, and teacheth the onely way of remedye and escape to be the faith in Iesus Christe: which things because they were sufficient to feare them that

that were not altogether incurable: the Apostle passeth to the other parte, where he preacheth Christ, whome of late we sayde was the chiefe marke that the Apostles shotte at in all their doctrine. And least his preaching might be in bayne, he so proposeth the matter, that he stirreth by their mindes with the conscience of their sinnes, to the ende that being feared therewith, they might with the more feruent fayth and grædinesse embrace Iesus Christ, in whom they heard saluation was preached. And his chiefe studie is to be short and playne, least any man might thinke, the knowledge of Christ, and the way of saluation contayned therein, to be lyke the dreames of the Philosophers, which neyther can be explicated in infinite volumes, nor be discusset by any disputations, nor fully be comprehended of anye man. For he compriseth the chiefe articles of our fayth in fewe wordes: which whosoever vnderstandeth, he hath both attayned to the knowledge of Christ, and to all the waye of saluation. For first, he describeth the person of Christ, and teacheth vs what he is and howe we should knowe him. Secondly, he intreateth of the passion and death of Christ. Thirdly, he declareth his resurrection. Of these thre we meane to saye so much as his spirite shall giue vs grace.

In speaking of Christes person, he handleth all things prudently, and circumspectly, least they that were as yet weake, might take occasion of offence. For when he had gotten them to be attent, by a short kinde of exhortation, he bringeth them by little and little, to the knowledge of Christ, saying: Iesus of Nazareth, a man approoued of God amongst you, by myracles, signes and woonders, which God wrought by him in the middest of you, as ye your selues know. &c. In the which words he pronounceth of Christ two things. First, that he was a man: for he calleth him one of Nazareth, which name he had of Nazareth a Citie of Galiley, where he was brought vp, as appeareth by the storie of the Gospel. But bicause this seemed not sure and strong ynough, he calleth him Virum, that is to say, a man, which name agreeth to none but him that is a very man in dede. And Christ is truly called a man, bicause as Paule saith, he taketh on him no Angels nature, or other heuently essence, but the sede of Abraham. Furthermore, least any man might take him for some common person, he maketh a difference betwene him and other, adding: approoued of God amongst you with myracles. &c. And although he purposed to teache the diuinitie of Christ, yet he prudently as yet, dissembleth the name of God, which would haue seemed very straunge in the eares of the Iewes. He woulde haue them by his dedes to learne that he was very God, whome hitherto they thought to be onely but a rascal and common person. It is as much as if he should saye: I preach vnto you Iesus of Nazareth, which many of you iudge to be but a man only. But you ought to consider that God hath openly shewed in him many declarations of a diuine nature, the ende of all which, was to commend him vnto you, and to teache you, that he was that long wayted for sauour of mankinde, which in tyme past he promised you. And the workes of Christ whereof God commended him, he adorne with thre titles. First, he calleth them powers, or vertues, least he might seeme to haue any affinitie with Iuglers. For the things which the Euangelistes write of him, he did verily and in dede, and of his owne power, as Luke plainely testifieth, where he sayeth, vertue or power went from him whereby the sicke were

The person
of Christ.

Heb. 2.

Luc. 6.

R. j.

healed.

Luc. 8.

Math. 11.

Iohn. 5.

Iohn. 10.

Iohn. 15.

Iohn. 14.

Christ is very
God and
man.

Iohn. 10.

Isa. 11. 9.

Ierem. 23.

Mich. 6.

healed. And himselfe sayth in another place, power or vertue went from him, when he healed the woman that was sicke of the bloody flure. Then he calleth Christes workes wonders, because they exceeded the common course of nature, and drew the mindes of the beholders into an admiration and amazednesse. But because the things whose causes we know not, are oftentimes taken for wonders, when in deede they portende nothing, at length he calleth the thinges that Christ did, signes. For the workes of Christ had a certaine ende, which was to beare witnesse of his Godheade, and of his office. For by them he was knowne to be both the sonne of God and also he that was promised to be the redeemer of the worlde. For the which cause he sent the disciples of Iohn to the consideration of his workes. And oftentimes he inculcateth his workes to the Jewes, and bpbzaydeth them, so that the fault of their incredulitie is the greater. The works (sayth he) that the father hath giuen me to finishe, the same workes that I doe, beare witnesse of me that the father hath sent me. **Againe**, If I doe not the workes of my father, beleue me not. But if I doe, and ye beleue not mee, beleue the workes, that ye may knowe and beleue that the father is in me, and I in him. **And againe**: If I had not done among them the woorkes which none other man did, they should haue had no sinne. Therefore Peter doth very wel to call the workes of Christ, signes. He sayth these signes were done amongst them, and he calleth none other to witnesse the same but themselves, to whome he preached, which did see them. And so he quippeth their greete waywardnesse and ingratitude which coulde not be mollified and overcome with so many and so great benefites of Christ, being so marueylous and wonderfull. He also goeth about by the consideration hereof, to bring them to the knowledge of Christes diuinitie, wherof not long after, he discourseth more largely. For although he here say that God did these things by Christ, yet it derogateth nothing from the power and diuinitie of Christ, whereas he confesseth these workes are giuen him of the father, and that the father and he be all one.

In these things we are taught the true knowledge of Iesus Christe. He is very God and man in one vnseparable person. Werye God from euerlasting begotten of the father. Man made of a woman, when in the tyme appoynted he came into the worlde to be the redeemer of mankind. And we must well marke the difference of the natures, to save, the diuine and humaine, which neyther deuyde the vnitie of person, nor by reason of the vnitie are confounded among themselves. For the properties of bothe the natures remayne inuiolable, whole and sounde, according as the Evangelists teach vs in euery place. For euen Christ himselfe which touching his diuinitie, is all one with the father: speaking of his manhode, confesseth his father to be greater than he. And Christ in his humanitie or manhode dyeth: who in his diuinitie or godheade, is subiect neyther to death, ne yet to any other corruption. Such an one doth the holy scripture teach vs euery where that Christe is. For whome the Prophetes call the offspring and sonne of Dauid, the same they vse also to call the father of eternitie our Lorde, and our God. And whome they propheticie shoulde be borne in Bethlehem, his progresse and outgoing they confesse to haue bene from the beginning and from euerlasting. **Pea**, the Lorde himselfe speaking of Christ, sayth: Arise O thou sworde, vpon my shepelharde, and vpon the

man

man which is my fellow, or (as some interprete it) my coequall. In the which words the two natures of Christ are more clærely to be sene than the day. For God calleth him Virum, that is, a very man, and also testifieth that he is his coequall. Manye other testimonies might be brought to this purpose, if neede so were, which they that reade the scriptures, maye euery where see. On these things rest the first articles of our fayth and beliefe in Christ. For we protest that we belæue in the onely begotten sonne of God, our Lorde Jesus Christ, which was conceived by the holy ghost, borne of the virgin Marie, and so forth. To the declaration whereof, all those things serue that are written in the Euangelistes concerning the mysterpe of his incarnation. See Luke.1.&.2. Iohn.1. Math.1.

Zach.13.

It shall be profitable for vs to holde fast the knowledge of both natures in Christ, bicause that hypon these dependeth the office of Christ, and the certaintie of our saluation. For where it is manifest that he is both God and man, we certainly belæue that he is a mediatour betwene God and man, bicause such ought to be the condition of a sequester, or mediatour, that he may be accepted of both the parties at variance. But the infirmity of man was not able to abyde the rigour and maiestie of Gods iustice, no more than the iustice of God alloweth mans righteousnesse, which is nothing. Therefore Jesus Christ was founde out, who being the sonne of God, of the same eternitie and substance with God, was made man, and ioyned both the natures so together in one person, that by his meane, we haue a peace renewed with God, and a fræ entrance prepared to the throne of grace. His merite the father can not deny, bicause he is both his beloued sonne, and also fræ himselfe from all sinne and wickednesse. To him also maye we safelye trust, considering he hath experience of our infirmities, and knoweth howe to haue compassion on vs. Wherevnto Paule had a respect, saying: We haue not an high Priest which cannot haue compassion on our infirmities, but was in all poyntes tempted lyke as we are, but yet without sinne. Agayne: Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of fleshe and bloude, he himselfe also lykewise tooke part with them, that through death he myght vanquish him that had Lordship ouer death, that is to say, the deuill: and that he myght deliuer them which through feare of death, were all theyr lyfe time subdued vnto bondage. For he in no place taketh on him the Angels, but the seede of Abraham taketh he on him. Wherefore in all things it became him to be made lyke vnto his brethren, that he might be mercifull, and a faithfull high Priest in things concerning God, for to purge the peoples sinnes. For in that it came to passe that he himselfe was tempted, he is able to succour the also that are tempted. The consideration of these things might teach men how they dote, which leaue this only mediatour Jesus Christ, and turne them vnto creatures, and thinke their causes must be relieued by intercession of Saintes. In which doyng they plainly testifie that they are boyde of the knowledge of Christe, forasmuch as they are ignorant of his office, and of the causes, for the which, he being God from everlastyng, would take verye manhode into the vnitie of his person. He surely sayth in the Gospell: No man cometh to the father, but by me. And Paule as he acknowledgeth one God, so he testifieth that there is but one mediatour betwene God and man, that is Jesus Christ. But bicause we shall otherwheres haue occasion to speake more largely of these things, let these fewe suffice for this

The vse of
Christes di-
uinitie and
humanitie.

Heb. 4.

Heb. 2.

Iohn. 14.

1. Tim. 2.

The passion
and death of
Christ.

present. And let vs take it for a great comfort that we see his Godheade, whome we reioyce in as our sauour and redemer, and after whose name we be called Christians, proued by so many argumentes. Let vs now returne to Peters sermon, and to the explication thereof.

Secondarilye he setteth forth the passion and death of Christ, in suche sort, that he labourerh to bring them in feare, considering howe heynous a matter they had committed. For he sayth: This Iesus haue you taken by the handes of vnrighteous persons, after he was deliuered by the determinate counsell and foreknowledge of God, and haue crucified and slayne him. Three things are here affirmed concerning the death of Christ. First, he accuseth all the people of so horrible a murther. You (sayth he) haue crucified him, and slayne him. Yet Peter was not ignoraunt that the souldiours hong him on the crosse with their owne handes. And yet truly doth he lay this crime to all the peoples charge, bicause they did not only consent to his death, but also required with importunate and sedicious clamour to haue him crucified, and with their importunacie ouercame Pylate which long withstode them, as the Euangelists teach vs.

The preaching of the
Gospel must
begin with
reproouing
of sinne.

By this example of Peter we are taught howe to beginne the preaching of the Gospel: verily with the rebuking of sinne, the which must be detected, published, and accused. For except men acknowledge their sinnes, they will not care much for Christ, so long as they thinke they haue no great neede of him. For it fareth in this matter as in the diseases of the bodye. They that eyther perceyue not their sicknesse, or else go about to hide it, care not for Physicke, neyther will they receyue the Physicion, though he offer himselfe. So, whosoever feele no conscience of their sinnes, or thinke their sinnes may be dissembled or purged by their owne satisfactions: they neyther seeke Christ greatly themselves, nor worthily receyue him, shewing himselfe to them in his Gospel, but standing rather vpon the affiance of their owne righteousness, feare not to withstande him. Whereof we haue manye examples in the Phariseys. For the which cause Christ professeth he is the Physicion of those that be sicke, and that he came not to saue the righteous, but to call sinners to repentance. And speaking of the holy ghost, amongst his properties he first rekeneth, that he shall reprove the worlde of sinne. Agayne, when he commendeth the preaching of the Gospel to his Apostles, he will first haue repentance to be taught, next after which, he will haue remission of sinnes to be ioynd. Therefore Peter doth not without a cause procede in this order, that speaking of the death of Christ, he first proueth his hearers to be guiltie, and to be the auctors thereof. And so were it necessary to haue Christes death preached in these dayes, that all men myght vnderstande the sonne of God dyed for their sinnes, and that they were the auctors thereof. For thus it shall come to passe, that men shall learne to be sozre in their heart for their sinnes, and shall embrace the saluation offered them in Christe with the more seruencye of fayth.

Math. 9.

Luc. 5.

Iohn. 16.

Luc. 24.

The boldnesse of Peter
in rebuking sinne.

But least Peter might seeme to accuse the Comminaltie only, he addeth another thing, whereby the heades and chiefe are accused to be the ring-leaders of so heynous a dede. For you (sayeth he) haue taken him by the handes of vnrighteous and slayne him. But who are those wicked and vnrighteous? The first among them is Iudas, sometime a disciple of Christ,

and

and an Apostle, but afterward a capitayne to them that tooke Iesus. The next to him are the high Bishops, with all the Colledge of Scribes and Priestes, who bybed Iudas with money, and hyzed him to doe so outrageous a mischiefe. In the same number may Pylate be reckoned, which litting in iudgement as Lieutenant to the Emperour, pronounced sentence of death vpon him. And Herode is not altogether faultlesse, who when he myght haue set him at libertie, being sent vnto him, thought it better when he had mocked him, to sende him backe agayne. All these Peter comprehendeth vnder the name of vnrightheous, whose power and authoritie was greatest in the Citie of Hierusalem. Howe daungerous a matter it was thus to saye, he shall easily perceyue that diligentlpe considereth the state and degree of these persons. It is an heynous offence to saye the sentence of the Judge condemning the guiltie, is vniust and vnrightheous. Yet Peter boldly sayth so in a most populous Citie, where the remembraunce of Christ whome he so highly commendeth, was yet very freshe. Here therefore (as in a glasse) we maye beholde howe stoute and bolde defenders of Christ the holy gholste maketh them, whome he doth vouchsafe to inspire with his spirite. We are also taught what libertie and freedome of speach ought to be in the ministers of the worde to accuse publike offences, and how little they are to be regarded who require. I can not tell what maner of modestie in the ministers. For we neede not thus to extenuate sinne, which otherwyle of it selfe (as Dauid sayeth) bleseth to flatter vs. Nor we must haue no respect of persons, seeing the person or the auctor can not excuse sinne: yea, howe much more of authoritie the offender is, so much more hurtfull is the offence. Besides, the minister is a publike person, to whose office and charge it is manifest all men are subiect. For Christ hath made him a stewarde of his housholde, wherein are riche, poore, Nobles, and Commoners, Magistrates, and subiects. And that the Lord saith to Hieremie, is spoken to all ministers: Beholde, this daye doe I make thee a strong fenced towne, an yron pillar, and a brasen wall, against the whole lande, against the kings and mighty men of Iuda, against the priests and people of the lande. Therefore whosoever haue taken vppon them the office of teaching in the Church, let them regarde no reasons of the worlde nor of the flesh, whereby to be made afrayde, but let them rather followe the examples of Iesus Christ, the Prophetes, and the Apostles, all which (it is plaine) bled the like libertie in repreherding of sinne that Peter bleseth in this place.

And whereas the things he spake of Christes death myght giue occasion of much offence, as though he had bene oppressed by the craft and power of men, and therefore myght seme not to be God: Peter preuenieth this offence, saying he was deliuered into the hands of vnrightheous men, by the determinate counsell and foreknowledge of God. For this is as much as if he had sayde: let no man thinke that eyther Iudas the traytour, or the Priestes, or Pylate, had eyther so much counsell or power, as to doe anye thing herein which God knewe not, or suffered not to be done. For whatsoeuer chaunced vnto Christ, came to passe by his foreknowledge and decree. Wher vnto also he had a respect in his Epistle, where he sayth that before the worlde was made, Christ was ordeyned before hande for this ende. For demonstration sake, may be brought the promises of God made in the beginning of the worlde, and the Oracles of the Prophetes, which teache

none

Psal. 36.

Math. 24.

Ierem. 1.

Christ dyeth
by the appointment
of God.

1. Pet. 1.

Esay. 55.

The prou-
dence of God
hath both
counsell and
prescience
in it.

Psal. 113.

The vse of
Gods pro-
vidence.

Iohn. 15.

none other waye of our redemption and saluation, than that which is gotten by the bloude of the sonne of God. Verily Esay sayeth, that the Lorde hath brought to passe, that the iniquitie of vs all is heaped vpon him. It was therefore the decree and worke of the same Lorde, that our sinnes by his bloude shoulde be purged. This is a notable place to cause vs to learne rightly to iudge of Gods prouidence.

Let vs marke therefore that he toucheth not only Gods prescience, as it were, by the way, but also maketh mention of Gods counsell or decree: Yea, he setteth it before Gods prescience, bicause he testifieth it was an appointed and determined matter, which is as much as if he should saye in our maner of speach: all this businesse was concluded by the premeditation, and long before deuysed counsell of God. Here is confuted the glose of them, which imagine nothing in God almost but prescience or foreknowledge: saying that God foretolde by the Prophetes, that he foreknew shoulde come to passe, taking from him in the meane whyle all prouidence and administration of things. Which men seeme to me, to make God an ydle gazer vpon the worlde, and a slouthfull and sluggish bodye, suffering many things to be done agaynst his will, and otherwyse than he had appointed. But Dauid instructeth vs farre otherwise, which sayth, that God beholdeth the things done in heauen and in earth, and maketh him also to rule kingdomes, and to gouerne all things with his becke. And Peter in this place sayth that God foresawe not only the falschode of Iudas, the bloudy enterprises of the Priests, and the iniquitie of Pylate, suffering them to come to passe by a certayne ydle permission, but also deduceth all the successe of this businesse, from the certaine and determinate counsell or decree of God. And that that happened in the sonne of God, ought to be vnderstanded of the vniuersal gouernance of mankind, which God susteineth and wieldeth, vnlesse we suppose that God which is alway constant in himselfe, is swarued from his common order and vsage. But chiefly it is conuenient we consider the ende wherefore Peter alleageth the decree of Gods prouidence: which ende bicause many obserue not, they by and by crie out that we make God the auctor of euill, bicause we say all things depende vppon his counsell and appointing. Howbeit Peter in this place neither excuseth Iudas nor his complices, nor yet chargeth God with that they wickedly & vniustly did. For where they sinned of their owne voluntary malice, and set before their eyes neither the counsell of God, nor the redemption of mankind, but folowed the naughty affections of couetousnesse, ambition, and hatred: the fault was in themselves, and iustly were they punished for the same. Peter maketh mention of Gods prouidence and decree, bicause he woulde put away the slander and offence of the crosse, and teach vs howe to iudge of all Christes affayres and our redemption. The same vse of Gods prouidence must we also set before vs, that it may serue as well to the instruction of our fayth and lyfe, as for our comfort in aduersitie. So by the decree of prouidence, the scriptures teache vs that our saluation dependeth vppon the mere grace of God, who before the worlde was made, ordeyned Iesus Christ to be our redeemer, and chose or elected vs in him. See Ephe 1. Rom. 9. 10. 11. &c. And thither doth Christ sende vs saying: you haue not chosen me, but I haue chosen you. Againe: without me you can do nothing. Therefore the consideration of predestination and Gods free election, only

beateth

beateth downe the pryde of mans righteousnesse, & the perillous affiance that we haue therein. The same bringeth vs most strong comfort in aduersitie, when the wicked are in prosperitie and aloft. For why shoulde a man be offended at them, considering he is sure that he is vnder the tuition of Gods prouidence, and that no aduersitie can happen vnto him without the will and pleasure of God: Therefore Christ sendeth vs to the flowres of the felde and birdes of the ayre, in the which, Gods prouidence is most easily perceyued: and comforteth the Apostles agaynst the slaunders of persecution with arguments taken from them, saying: Are not two little sparrowes solde for a farthing? And one of them shall not light on the ground without your heauenly father. Yea, all the heares of your heade bee numbred. If we examine these wordes after the capacite of our reason, I know they seeme to excede all truth. But if we consider the wisdom and omnipotencie of God, which farre passeth all mans reason, there can nothing be sayde that maye seeme so farre to excede the truth, but his force and power pierceth through it and passeth it. See what is written. Psal. 139 and. 147. If we set these things before our eyes, the consideration of his prouidence shall yelde vs much learning and comfort. And if any man will go beyonde this, and passe his boundes, to him we saye as Salomon sometime said: He that will search out high things, it shall be to heauy for him. And as Paule sayde: What art thou O man which disputest with God. &c. See the place. Rom. 9. Neyther was it without the will of God, that the Apostle which was rapt into the thirde heauen, and hearde wordes not meete to be vttered to man, disdeyning to answer curious questions about this matter of Gods prouidence and predestination, concludeth all that disputation with an exclamation full of admiration and wonder, saying: O the deepenesse of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Howe vnsearchable are his iudgements, and his wayes past finding out: For who hath knowne the minde of the Lorde? or who hath bene his counsellor? or who hath giuen vnto him first, and he shall be recompensed againe? For of him, and through him, and for him, are all things. To him be glory for euer. Amen.

Last of all, Peter ioyneeth the resurrection of Iesus Christ from the deade, in these wordes: whom God hath rayfed vp, and loosed the sorrowes of death bicause it was impossible that he shoulde be holden of it. This also is a remedy agaynst the slaunder of the crosse, but rather it is to be referred to the order of our redemption and saluation, which he purposeth to intreate of. But bicause he speaketh of the resurrection in the processe following, we will now be the shorter. Among other things, it is chiefly to be considered, that hauing described the person of Christ, omitting many other things, he maketh mention onely of his death and resurrection. The cause was, for that in these two, the whole summe of our saluation is conteyned. For by his death, he purged the trespasses of our sinne, which otherwyse coulde not haue bene purged. By his resurrection, he ouercame death, which was the punishment of sinne, and subdued the force thereof, according to the saying of the Prophete, alleaged by Paule: Death is swallowed vp in victorie. Death where is thy sting? Hell where is thy victory? The same thing Peter seemeth to meane, in this place, where he sayth that the sorowes of death were loosed by Christes resurrection, bicause it was impossible that he shoulde be holden of it. Neyther of the dolors of the body (which followe death,)

Math. 6.
and, 10.

Prou. 25.

The resur=
rection of
Christ.

Hose. 13:
1. Cor. 15.

Iohn. 5.

Heb. 2.

Rom. 4.

Rom. 10.

Rom. 8.

death,) can it be expounded, syth yet we feele them to be most bytter. But the powers of death are loosed, and the terrors taken away, wherewith in times past it tormented mens mindes. For it bled sinne as a sting, the punishment wherof, God appoynted this death: and therfore it must needes be terrible, seeing it was the punishment of sinne. And albeit Christ hath taken sinne away, yet death remayneth, whereby we passe out of thys life and worlde: but by the merite of Christ, it is made the doore of lyfe, and therfore it can no more feare them that beleue, as Christ sayth: He that heareth my worde, and beleueth on him that sent mee, hath euerlasting lyfe, and shall not come into damnation, but is scaped from death vnto lyfe. Therfore sayth the Apostle in another place, that Christ through death subdued him that had Lordship ouer death: Which coulde not haue bene sayde, vnlesse he had risen againe after death. Therefore these two must alwayes be ioyned together: which thing Paule doth diligently obserue, where he sayth, Christ was deliuered for our sinnes, and raysed agayne for our iustification. Agayne: This is the worde of faith which we preach. If thou knowledg with thy mouth that Iesus is the Lorde, and beleue in thy heart that God raised him vp from death, thou shalt be safe. Where he maketh mention onely of the resurrection: but he therein includeth death also, bicause a resurrection without death can not be imagined. Let vs therefore learne to know Iesus Christ, who being verie God from euerlasting, became man for our sake, cleansed our sinnes by his death, ouercame the sorowes and strength of death, by his glorious resurrection, and being ascended into heauen, maketh intercession for vs. To him be blessing, honoz, power and glory for euer. Amen.

The .xv. Homelie.

FOR Dauid sayth of him: afore hande I sawe God alwayes before mee: for he is on my right hande that I shoulde not be mooued. Therefore did my heart reioyce, and my tongue was glad. Moreouer also, my flesh shall rest in hope, bicause thou wilt not leaue my soule in hell, neyther wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Thou hast shewed mee the wayes of lyfe: thou shalt make me full of ioy with thy countenance.



The Apostle Peter in our yesterdaies Sermon, declared the chiefe articles of our Christian faith, shewing vs how Iesus Christe was very God and man, how he suffred death for vs, and rose againe from the deade. The ende and vse of all whiche, is to teache vs to acknowledge him to be the redeemer of mankind that was promised. Nowbeit the article of resurrection for many causes, might seeme very incredible among the Jewes. For besides that it seemeth doubtfull to mans reason, there was no small number of Saduceys which flatly denied it. And the souldiours being bribed of the Priestes with money, had bruted a false rumour how the disciples of Christ had stolne his bode out of the graue. Yea, and Christ himselfe after his resurrection, did not shewe himselfe to all the people as before he bled, but was conuersant onely with his disciples. Therefore it was necessarye that this article shoulde be both more

plainly

plainly declared, and with more sounde arguments confirmed: especially for that the Apostles sayth was had in suspicion of all men. Wherefore Peter flyeth to the authoritie of Dauid, the most notable king and Prophete among the Jewes, by the testimony of whom taken out of the .xvi. psalme, he proueth that the resurrection of Christ ought to seeme neyther straunge nor incredible: forasmuch as the same came to passe according to y^e counsell and ordinance of God, and was also long before prophesied by the Oracles of the Prophets. And bicause Peter afterward confirmeth the authoritie of this testimony, and sheweth that it appertayneth only vnto Christ: it should be superfluous now to tarie long in prooue of the same. For the authority of so great an Apostle ought to suffice vs, which the Jewes their selues to whome these things were spoken, were not able to refell. Let vs rather marke that Dauid so speaketh this in the person of Christ, that he himselfe also taketh comfort thereof, which comfort belongeth also to all them that worship Christ, bicause the things spoken of the heade, must after a sorte belong also vnto the members. We must therefore diligently consider this place, which most absolutely comprehendeth in it all the reason of true religion, with the most wholesome fruites of so holy a studie, amongst which, the resurrection of the bodies is mentioned, which the holy Prophet declareth diligently and at large.

He expresseth in one verse the whole summe of all godlynesse, and holy life, where he sayth: Afore hande I sawe God alwayes before mee. For he is on my right hande that I should not be moued. Here are two things sayd. First he telleth what he doth, then wherefore he so doth. Touching the first he sayth: Aforehande I sawe God alwayes before me. Or as it is in the Hebrew: I set God in my sight, or before mine eyes. Therefore Christ followed this rule of lyfe, to set the Lorde alwayes before his eyes, and to thinke he liued alwayes in his sight. This to doe, as it ought to be, two things are most worthy to be obserued. The one is the study & endeuour of obedience. For we vse to saye they set God before their eyes, which haue regarde to his preceptes, and being stirred vp with an holpe feare of God, study to please him, from whom they know nothing is hid. Concerning this study of obedience, God himselfe speaketh, where he commaundeth Abraham to walke before him, or in his sight. The other is sayth, whereby in aduersitie we looke onely to God, and seeke for helpe, succour, and deliuey from him onely. Hereof Dauid in an other place speaketh, saying: Beholde euen as the eyes of seruantes looke vnto the handes of their Maisters, and as the eyes of a mayden vnto the hande of hir Mystresse: euen so our eyes wayte vpon the Lorde our God, vntill he haue mercy vpon vs. Both these properties maye easily be seene in Jesus Christ. For so reuerentlye did he behaue him selfe towardes his father, that as Paule sayth, he was obedient to the death: yea, euen the death of the Crosse. And such a diligent care and regarde had he of those persons that his father gaue him charge with, that going to his death, he coude yelde an accompt of them, saying: Those that thou gauest me haue I kept, and none of them is perished, but that lost chylde. Agayne: I haue glorified thee vpon earth, I haue finished the woorke which thou gauest me to doe. Furthermore as a very man, with firme and constant sayth, he set his eyes vpon God only, whom he only called vpon in all aduersitie, and thanked him onely for the benefites he receyued, as the hystorie of the

Psal.16.

The summe
of godlynesse
and religion.

Gen.17.

Psal.123.

Phil.2.

Iohn.17.

Gospell teacheth. He might therefore by Dauid truely saye: I haue set the Lorde alwayes before me. By this example must all they which will be accounted the true worshippers and children of God, frame all their lyfe and doings. And this was the only cause of all the vertues, which we reade flourished sometime in the Saints.

In his thirde
booke of Episto-
les, the. xxv.
Epistle.

Gen. 39.

Psal. 14. 36.

Psal. 94.

Psal. 50.

Esay. 9.

Seneca gaue counsell in times past that for the better auoyding of faults which vse to be done in secret when we be by our selues, we shoulde suppose some seuerer person, such as was Scipio, Laelius, or Cato, were present, as a beholder and witnesse of our doings. But howe much more profitable would it be to thinke howe God alwayes beholdeth and seeth what we saye and doe: Bicause Ioseph did set God alwayes before his eyes, neyther coulde he be brought by his Mistresse entycements, from the tracke of right and honestie, neyther was he dismayed when he was in prison and aduersitie. The lyke reason may we make of all other thinges. And here may we espie the great difference that is betwene the godlye and vngodlye. For the vngodly when the worlde goeth well with them, set not God before their eyes, but (as Dauid testifieth) blinded with wicked folly, deny that there is any God. Whereby it commeth to passe, that lyke wilde horses, breaking their barres and reynes, they burst into all kind of mischief. For as it is sayde in another place, they are perswaded that God hath neyther eyes nor eares, wherewith to see and heare their mischieuousnesse. But when God whome they will not set before their eyes, sheweth himselfe to them to be angrie, and as it is sayde, reprooueth them to their faces, and punisheth their wickednesse, they runne to him agayne, but yet aske no helpe and succour (as the children of God vse) of him that correcteth them, but for a season stryue agaynst his iustice with their owne strength, wherewith when they see they profite nothing, they turne and call vpon creatures, or else being vtterly at their wittes ende, rushe headlong into the pitte of desperation. There are infinite examples of such men, of which, this ought with vs to be the vse, to learne to set God before our eyes, to whome we ought to approue our selfe and our lyfe, and in whome we ought to haue all our trust and affiance.

Psal. 27.

Psal. 46.

Psal. 62.

But Christ sheweth the cause of his so godly and holy an industrie, adding: bicause he is on my right hande that I shoulde not be mooued. Therefore (sayth he) set I God before mine eyes, bicause he is present with me, what soeuer I doe. If I please him, he is at hande to ayde me, that I be mooued with no feare or terrour. If I neglect him, he is at hande to beholde all my doings, and in time to come, will be a most seuerer iudge agaynst me. For this cause, the worshippers of Christ are mooued to haue Christ before their eyes, as they many times professe themselves. Herevnto belongeth that that we read Dauid & such as he was, sayd: The Lord is my light and my saluation, whome then shall I feare? The Lorde is the strength of my lyfe, of whome then shall I be afraide? God is our hope and strength, a very present helper in trouble. Therefore will not we feare though the earth be mooued, and though the hilles bee caried into the middest of the sea, Againe: God is my strength and my saluation, he is my defence so that I shall not greatly fall. Let no man thinke this a bayne tossing or repeticion of wordes. For this confidence of the Saintes stayeth vpon the promises of God, and vpon experience and dailie examples. For it is the worde of

God:

God: Call vpon me in the time of thy trouble, & I will deliuer thee. **Againe:** Bicause he hath set his loue vpon mee, therefore shall I deliuer him, I shall set him vp, bicause he hath knowne my name. He shall call vpon mee, and I will heare him: yea, I am with him in trouble, I will deliuer him, and bring him to honour. **These promises are confirmed by many examples, such as in the holy Scriptures we reade of Ioseph, Dauid, Daniel, and his fellowes, Sufanne, Ezechias, and many other. But we haue no nede of olde examples, since we euery day haue experience of the truth of Gods promyses. For although there be many tribulations in this life, yet God deliuereth his chldzen from them all, and his right hande, as it were, stayeth vs as we slippe, and he suffreth vs not to bee tempted aboue our strength. And as Dauid confesseth:** In the multitude of our sorrowes, his comfortes refresh our soule. And this is that safetie of the godlye, a farre other thing than that which maketh the wicked to looke aloft, while by reason of their riches and worldly glozy, they thinke themselues out of daunger and gunshot, who must nedes be deceyued, bicause all fleshe is grasle, and the glorye thereof as the flower of the felde.

Psal. 50.

Psal. 91.

1. Cor. 10.

Psal. 94.

Isa. 40.

The fruites
of godlynesse.

Joy of heart.

Iohn. 16.

1. The. 5.
Phil. 4.

Prou. 1.

Luc. 6.

Rom. 5. 8.

Joy of tonge.

But Christ proceedeth on, speaking in his spirite by Dauid, and rehearseth the singular fruites of this studie and endeouour. For this cause (sayth he) did my heart reioyce, and my tongue was glad: moreouer, also my fleshe shall rest in hope. Here are thre thinges sayde, euery which of them farre passeth all the riches of the worlde, which as I sayde, must be considered both in Christ and his members.

First he speaketh of ioye, and of the ioye of the heart, to teache vs that that is a true, sounde and stable ioye. He meaneth the same ioye, which he afterwarde promiseteth to his Disciples, where he sayth: Nowe ye haue sorrowe, but I will see you againe, and your heart shall reioyce, and your ioye shall no man take from you. Paule speaketh of the same, bidding the Christians alwaye reioyce. Principally it is mete we consider the cause of ioye. For this cause (sayth he) my heart reioyced, bicause the Lorde is on my right hande. Then the saythfull reioyce in the Lorde. The wicked also be glad and reioyce, and for ioye manye times become madde. But this they doe eyther bicause they haue riches and honors, and the fruition of the naughty lustes of the fleshe, or else by reason of their wickednesse, as Salomon sayth of some. But their ioyes are neyther sounde nor sure, but are ended in most grienous sorrow. For Christes sentence in the Gospell was long ago pronounced against them: woe be to you that now laugh, for you shall mourne and weepe. But the mirth or ioye of the godlye, bicause it stayeth vpon the Lorde, cannot quayle or be ouerturned. For they glozye and reioyce in afflictions, bicause that in all thinges they knowe they shall ouercome, by him which loued them in Iesus Christ.

The seconde fruite of godlynesse is the gladnesse of the tongue. By this is expresse the greatnesse of the ioye which can not be kept within the minde, but breaketh forth by the tongue. For this tongue of the godly reioyceth not in light affections and ribauldrie, or in wanton talke, such as we maye see in the vngodly, but in godly giuing of thankes, and in setting forth the name of God and his benefites. And surely this is a great glozy of the godly, that they perceyue themselues euery day bounde vnto God, by new and fresh benefites, for the which cause they prayse his holy name.

Psal. 50.

Psal. 22.

Psal. 60.

Hose. 14.

Chearefull
death.

Phil. 1.

Psal. 90.

Many reioyce in the fauour of Princes, and thinke it a worthe matter when they haue any iust occasion offered them to prayse and commend the Princes liberality. But the glory of a christian man is farre greater, which euery day findeth most weightie causes & fresh occasions to commend and set forth the goodnesse of God. And herein consisteth not the least part of our dutie: for God will be magnified and extolled of vs, and requyrez none other thing of vs for his beneficence, bicause he hath no neede of any thing that is ours. Call (sayth he) vpon me in the time of trouble, so will I heare thee, and thou shalt glorifie me. Hereof procede those vowes of the Saints, which promise songs and hymnes vnto the Lord. Christ in one place in the person of Dauid, promisetht this thing to his father, saying: I will declare thy name vnto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I prayse thee. My prayse is of thee in the great congregation: my vowes will I performe in the sight of them that feare him. And Dauid where he asketh helpe of God, speaketh after like maner: I will prayse the name of God with a song: and magnifie it with thankesgiuing. This also shall please the Lord better than a bullocke that hath hornes and hooves. Hereto maye be applied the voyce of the godly spoken of by the Prophete: O forgiue vs all our sinnes, receyue vs graciously, and then will we offer the bullockes of our lippes vnto thee. Here, by the way, may the infelicitie of our dayes be perceyued. For where there be very fewe whose tongues reioyce in giuing God thankes and in praying his holy name, therefore is that true ioye also verie rare that is conceyued by faith, and holy exercise of obedience. By the which argument we maye strongly conclude, that the exercise of fayth and godlynesse is also very rare.

The thirde fruite of godlynesse is: My fleshe shall rest in hope. He speaketh of death, whiche he promisetht him shall be ioyfull and without all grieffe. Here, in the meane while, is shadowed out a most absolute felicitie and blisse, which by death (as the Poete sayth, death is the last ende of all thinges) can not be let or hindred. By death, which for the most part cometh sodainly, all things whereby this unhappye worlde measureth felicitie, vse to be disturbed. At the mentioning of death, rich men are amazed, ambitious men quake, voluptuous men tremble, and the most valiaunt men vse to be afraide. But Christ reioyceth herein, as in a rest full of great hope. So doe all the members of Christe, to whome aboue all other men it is giuen to contemne death, yea, to reioyce in death, whose proper tie the Prophete in this place most liuely expresseth. First, he maketh mention only of the fleshe or body, shewing that death hath no power vpon the soule; which is the chiefe part of man. For the soule departing out of the body, goeth to euerlasting life, as otherwheres we haue shewed, which was the cause that Paule desired to be loosed and to be with Christ: Then speaking of the flesh or of the body, he threatneth it not with destruction, but sayth: My fleshe shall rest in hope. Therefore he promisetht a rest to the flesh, which the godlye in death finde to be most sure. All the whole race of our lyfe swarmeth with heapes of calamities and daungers. Trauell and paines are still at hande. Sorrowes and cares spring euery day still a fresh. And to be brieffe, this short life is tossed with the continuall stormes and tempestes of combzances and traueyles, so that the Prophete truly sayde: The dayes of our age are threescore yeaes and tenne, and though men be so strong,

that

that they come to foure score yeares: yet is their strength then but labour and sorowe. And in other places the Scripture sayth, that man is borne to labour, as the birde to flying. But in death is rest, and he that is deade, hath escaped all the toyle of labours and care, sicknesse, and all other accidents of aduersities. And least any man shoulde thinke we had none other rest in death, than such as beastes and other liuing creatures haue, which haue no life after this: he sheweth that our fleshe resteth in hope. He meaneth the hope of resurrection, which is both certaine, and also the only cause of true comfort. For God putteth vs in this hope, in calling himselfe the God of them which are departed this life, as Christ teacheth of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob. And in the Prophets he constantly promisetht there shal be a resurrection. See Ezechiel.37. Dan.12. Isa.26. &c.66. Christ reasoneth oftentimes in the Gospell of the same. The tyme shall come (sayeth he) when all they that bee in their graues shall heare my voyce, and shall come forth. &c. Looke moze touching this matter in Math.25. Iohn 11. Iob speaking of this hope, sayth: I knowe that my redeemer liueth, and that I shall rise out of the earth in the last day, and shall be couered againe with my skinne, and shall see God in my flesh: yea, and I my selfe shall behold him, not with other but with the same eyes. And doubtlesse the holye Martyrs being emboldened with this hope, ouercame all the sorowes which they susteined, with great constancie of minde. Therefore it is not without cause that Paule biddeth vs out of these and such like places, to take argumentes of comfort, in the departure and burials of our friendes.

Furthermore, bicause the Prophet tooke occasion to make mention of the resurrection, he moze fully setteth forth the same, going on & speaking still vnder the person of Christ. For he saith: Bicause thou wilt not leaue my soule in hell, neyther wilt thou suffer thine holye one to see corruption. Thou hast shewed me the wayes of lyfe: thou shalt make me full of ioy with thy countenance. There be in these words diuers things, which are to be vnderstaded of Christ only, as Peter teacheth in the things folowing. Yet bicause the certaintie of our resurrection dependeth vpon Christes resurrection, whome Paule for that cause calleth the first frutes of them that sleepe: the frutes and effects of all those things that came to passe in Christs resurrection, appertain also to vs. Therefore it shall be profitable for vs diligentlve to consider the things here sayde. For as they set forth the resurrection of Christ: so they teach vs wher ein to hope, and paint out the order and maner of our resurrection, with that true felicitie which followeth the same.

First he sayth: Thou shalt not leaue my soule in hell. The Hebrewes take this worde Inferi (which we englishe hell) sometime for the sepulchre or graue, sometime for the deade and buried: in which sense the brethren of Ioseph saye: Thy seruantes shall bring the graye heade of our father with sorow, ad infernum, siue inferos, that is to say, to the graue. The sense therefore of Christes words is, that y soule of Christ should not tary long separated from the bodye, in the place where the soules of the blessed be, but should retorne shortly to the body againe. Manye haue vnderstode these wordes of the discention of Christ into hell, which we professe among the articles of our faith: whose iudgement me thinketh ought not altogether to be reiecte. Great disputation hereabout hath bene kept among the ancient wryters. And in our dayes haue certaine phzeneticke persons starte

forth

Iob.5.

Math.22.

Iohn.5.

Iob.19.

1. Thes.4.

The article
of resurrecti-
on declared.

1. Cor.15.

The descen-
tion of Christ
into hell.

Luc. 23.

John. 19.

1. Pet. 3. 4.

Sap. 3.

The resur-
rection of the
body.

Gene. 3.

Phil. 3.

forth, which haue sayde that the soule of Christ hath suffered in hell the tor-
mentes of the damned. But Christe himselfe confuteth them: whiche, a
little before he died, sayde vnto the theefe: This daye thou shalt be with mee
in Paradyse. Besides, being ready to giue vp the ghost, he sendeth not his
soule to hell, but commendeth it into the handes of his father. Furthermore,
it is manifest, that he offered himselfe vpon the aultar of the Crosse for the
sinnes of all the worlde, and did there fully accomplish the businesse of our
saluation, so that he truely sayde: It is done or finished. Therefore it must
not be suffered that any shall say, Christes soule suffered any thing after it
departed out of his body. It was heauy and sadde, and felt the terrours of
death at mount Oliuete, as he himselfe confesseth. It seemed also to haue
felt the angrie countenance and wrath of his father, in punishing sinne,
when he sayde vpon the crosse: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken
me? But bicause his death and passion was sufficient to purge our sinnes:
it is a very absurde and vnchristian point to adde anye thing else thereto.
Therefore Christes descending into hell may plainely be vnderstanded, if
we saye eyther that he truely died, or that the merite of his death extended
vnto them also which died before him, from the beginning of the worlde,
as Peter in another place seemeth to meane, saying: that Christ preached
vnto the deade which were in prison. This serued bothe to the greater com-
fort of those which beleued the promises made of him, and increased the
paines and sorowes of the reprobate which wickedlye contemned them.
In the meane season, the vtilitie and profit of the things here spoken is de-
riued vnto vs also. For as Christes soule was not forsaken: so our soules
be in the protection and hande of God, and shall retourne to our bodies a-
gaine in the later day.

Secondly therefore he addeth: Neyther wilt thou suffer thine holy one
to see corruption. This after a sort pertaineth to the exposition of the first
member. In the meane season, as he spake of the soule: so he sheweth
what shall become of the body. He sayth it shall not see corruption, whiche
afterwarde, at large he declareth to be vnderstanded of Christes body on-
lye. And surely it is plaine that all our bodies are subiect to corruption, for
the saying of God must of necessitie be fulfilled: Thou art dust and into dust
thou shalt retorne againe. Neyther doth the arte and industrie of man any
thing preuaile, going about to conserue the bodies of great men, with
swete odours, spicery and perfumes. But Christes bodye, bicause it was
raysed againe the thirde daye, coulde not see corruption, much lesse be cor-
rupted, but rose againe a glorious body, and boyde of all corruption. Here
is the resurrection of our bodies proued. For although our bodies corrupt,
& moulder to dust, yet by the power of Christ, when the last day cometh,
they shall be restored againe, as we haue heretofore declared. For our mor-
tall bodies (as Paule sayth) must become lyke vnto Christes glorified bodye.
Neyther shall it be impossible for him to raise our bodies from the dust,
which made man at the beginning of claye, yea, all this great frame of the
worlde of nothing. They maye here also be confuted which saye Christes
body in the resurrection was banished awaye, and had not the true pro-
perties of a body, such as is to be felt and handled, to be conteyned in a
place, to moue from place to place. &c. For if he sawe no corruption, howe
coulde he lose those things, without the which a berpe body cannot consist:

Thirde

Thirdly he sayth: Thou hast shewed mee the wayes of life, that is, thou hast brought me into life. And he speaketh of the heauenlye and eternall life, which only is worthe so to be called. Ergo, life euertlasting followeth after resurrection, which life, euen as Christ had, so shall we haue the same in him. This is well to be obserued where it is sayde, the waye of life is shewed to Christ. Adam by sinne deserued death, and the doore of Paradise after he was driuen out, God fensed and garded with a sword of fire, least he shoulde retorne thither and eate of the tree of life. God signified hereby that men of their owne strength and power could not enter into life. But in Christ the waye of life was set open againe, that euen as by one man sinne entred into the worlde, and through sinne death: so by Christ only, righteousness and life shoulde be restored againe. Therefore the Apostle speaking of Christ, sayth that the life appeared to vs. And Christ euery where is called the breade of life, the light, and the waye of lyfe, and the resurrection, and the lyfe. This commoditie therefore which the resurrection of Christ hath gotten vs, is verie singular, bicause we shall be rayled to an heauenly and an eternall life, not to an earthly and mortall, such as we now liue, which may be trulper called a death than a life. The meane hereto is in Christ alone, whome whosoever despiseth, he cannot attayne vnto life, as Christ sayth: No man commeth vnto the father but by me.

Last of al he addeth: Thou shalt make me full of ioy with thy countenance. By these wordes is expessed the condicion of an heauenlye and eternall life, which is of a farre other sort, than the life we haue here on earth. For this life as was aforesayde, is full of traueyle, sorowe, care, and trouble. The eternall life is full of mirth and ioye. For there God will wipe all teares from the eyes of hys faithfull. And there shall bee no more death, neyther sorrow, neyther crying, neyther shall there be any more paine. And these being taken awaye, there can remaine nothing, but ioye. Therefore Christ, sayth he, will say to the faithfull seruant, enter into the ioy of thy Lord. This ioye in an other place Christ calleth the glorie, which he testifieth he had with his father before the worlde was made. Christes humanitie was taken vp to be partaker of that ioye and mirth in that kingdome, which in his godhead he possessed from euertlasting. For so we read it was promised long ago, God saying: sit thou on my right hande vntill I make thine enemies thy footestool. In these wordes are contained an article of our faith, where we confesse Christ is ascended into heauen, & sitteth vpon the right hande of his father omnipotent. In the meane while, we that by faith are grafted in Christ, and made his members, must beleue that these things appertaine to vs likewise. For it can not be that the members can be pulled from their head. And Christ promiseth: Where I am, there shall my minister be also. And declaring this promise other wheres in moe wordes, he sayth: In my fathers house are many dwellinges: If it were not so, I woulde haue tolde you. I go to prepare a place for you: and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come againe, and receyue you euen vnto my selfe, that where I am, there may yee be also. Yea, being ready to go to his death, when he had made and disposed of his will, as by waye of a testament, he sayth: Father, I will that they which thou hast giuen me, be with me where I am, that they may see my glory which thou hast giuen mee. Which thinges, for that they shoulde not be vnderstanded only of the Apostles, he plainly testifieth that he

Life euertlasting.

Gen.3.

Rom.5.

1.Iohn.1.

Iohn.6.

14.1.11.

Iohn.14.

The state of the heauenly life is moste blissefull.

Apoc.21.

Math.25.

Iohn.17.

Psal.110.

The ascension of Christ.

Iohn.12.

Iohn.14.

Iohn.17.

The face or
countenance
of God.

Prou. 16.
and 20.

Math. 5.

Psal. 80.

he prayeth not for them alone, but also for all those which shoulde beleue in him through their teaching. Therefore it is no doubt, but we also shall be filled with ioye, in that eternall and heauenly life, which shall follow the resurrection of our bodies.

Here must we not omit to marke how he sayth and sheweth the cause efficient of this ioy, is the face of God. Which we must vnderstande to be the fauourable and mercifull countenance of God, wherewith he looketh chearefully vpon vs for Christes sake, so that there appeareth no token of the olde anger, which we deserued by sinne. For as the cherefull countenance of a king is life (as Salomon sayth) and by hys looking well about him, all euill is driuen away: So in the looke of God all fulnesse of ioye is to be had, for them that beleue, wherunto me seemeth Christ had a respect, saying: Blessed be the cleane in heart, for they shall see God. And therefore the godly pray: Shew vs the light of thy countenance, and wee shall be safe. Hereof maye we gather, howe great miserie they shall be in, which being secluded from the face of God, shall be throwen into vtter darkenesse. And thus hitherto hath the Prophete in fewe wordes described all true godlynesse and true felicitie. Let vs learne to set God before our eyes, to reuerence him obediently, and to trust in him onely. Of this endeuour shall spring true ioye, and we shall haue euery daye newe occasions to set forth Gods goodnesse, and when we depart this life, we shall rest in glad hope. And after that, shall followe a blessed resurrection, wherein the soules shall be restored to the body, and being taken into that true life, we shall be filled with all ioye, before the face of God, with Iesus Christ, our brother and coheire, to whome be blessing, honour, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The .xvj. Homelie.

YE men and brethren, let me freely speake vnto you of the Patriarch Dauid: for hee is both deade and buried, and his sepulchre remayneth with vs vnto this daye. Therefore seeing he was a Prophet, and knew that God had sworne with an othe to him, that Christ (as concerning the fleshe) shoulde come of the fruite of his loynes, and sit vpon his seate: he knowing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soule shoulde not bee left in hell, neyther his fleshe shoulde see corruption. This Iesus hath God raysted vp, whereof we all are witnesses. Sythence now that he by the right hande of God is exalted, he hath receyued of the father the promise of the holye ghost, he hath shed forth this gift, which you now see and heare. For Dauid is not ascended into heauen, but hee sayth: The Lorde sayde vnto my Lorde, sit thou on my right hande vntill I make thy foes thy footestool. So therefore let all the house of Israell knowe for a suretie that God hath made that same Iesus, whome ye haue crucified, Lorde and Christ.



Because the whole order of our saluation is accomplished, as it were, in the resurrection of our bodies, therefore the scripture is greatly occupied in prouing the same: which was the cause that Peter argued so diligently of Christes resurrection, wherevpon it is manifest that our resurrection dependeth. For he is not contented simply and plainely to preache the same,

but

but describeth all the order and maner thereof out of the .xvi. psalme, the authoritie whereof he useth, to proue the same resurrection: to the intreaty whereof, this present place also serueth. For first, preventing the obiection of his aduersaries by a preoccupation, he proueth that this psalme ought to be expounded of Christ. Then commeth he backe againe to Christ, and teacheth vs that whatsoever was prophesied by Dauid, is fulfilled in him. And at length, he concludeth his sermon with a graue obtestation, and beseeching of them.

About the testimonie of the psalme, Peter doth two things. First, he teacheth them that it cannot be expounded of Dauid by any meanes. Then he proueth that Dauid prophesieth of Christ. And because the authoritie of Dauid was verie great with the Jewes, he mollifieth the mindes of his hearers with a proper preface, least they might thinke he spake any thing contemptuously of Dauid, yea, he citeth themselves as witnesses of the things that he meaneth to saye: Let me (sayth he) speake of the Patriarch Dauid to you, who I knowe are not ignorant in Dauids matters, and are earnest studentes of his prophesies. And because many would thinke that he spake these things which we haue cited, of himselfe, the matter must be the better marked, and then shall it appeare, that they are most manifestly deceyued in their opinion. For Dauid speaketh of one whose soule shoulde not abide with the soules of the deceased, and which in his bodye shoulde suffer no corruption. But it is euident that Dauid is deade, and his tombe at this day is to be seene amongst you, wherein his body after the maner of all flesh (as he sayeth of himselfe) is consumed into dust. Therefore the wordes of the psalme cannot be vnderstanded of him. Howbeit though this be a firme and sure argument, yet was it not sufficient, vnlesse also he coulde proue, it ought to be vnderstanded of Christ. Wherefore he addeth: Therefore seeing Dauid was a Prophete, and knewe that God had sworne with an othe to him, that Christ (as touching the flesh) should spring of the fruite of his loynes, and sit vpon his seate: he knowing this before. &c. By the which wordes, he teacheth vs that no man ought to marueyle that Dauid prophesied these things of Christ, which was promised to be the saviour of the worlde. He useth two kindes of argument. The first is taken of Dauids person and of his office. For all men knowe that Dauid was a Prophete. But this was the office of all Prophetes, by the spirite of Christ to searche out his mysteries, chiefly his death and resurrection, as Peter in other places diligently teacheth. And if a man searche the bookes of the Prophetes, he shall there finde manifest and plaine prophesies of Christ, and of his kingdome, which thing Christ himselfe acknowledged, saying after his resurrection: It behooued that all the things shoulde be fulfilled which was written in the lawe of Moses and in the Prophetes concerning me. Therefore what marueyle is it that Dauid being a Prophete, prophesied of Christ? The other argument is touching the promises of God. God had promised by an othe vnto Dauid, that out of his loynes shoulde spring he that was promised to be the saviour of the worlde, which shoulde establish the throne of his kingdome, and possesse it for euer. Therefore Dauid ought and might easily expounde the mysteries of that saviour so promised. And the things here rehearsed, ought manifestly to be vnderstanded of him, because they can not be meant of Dauid, nor of anye other. The

The testimonie
of the .xvi.
psalme is
proued.

1. Reg. 2.

1. Pet. 1.
2. Pet. 1.

Luc. 24.

2. Sam. 7.

Luc. 1.

Psal. 132.

Psal. 110.

The olde fa-
thers were
not utterly
bovde of the
knowledge
of Christ.

Iohn. 8.

Rom. 15.

God swears
reth.

promises made long ago vnto Dauid; appertaine to the explication of this place. Amongst which, the chiefe is that, that Nathan the Prophete by the spirite of God declared in these wordes, when Dauid consulted touching the building of the Temple: When thy dayes bee fulfilled, thou shalt sleepe with thy fathers, and I will set vp thy seede after thee, which shall proceede out of thy body, and will stablish his kingdome. Hee shall builde an house for my name, and I will stablish the seate of his kingdome for euer, &c. Which place as may easily be perceyued, can not be vnderstanded of Salomon, because he was bozne, and set in his kingdome, Dauid being yet alyue, neyther was the seate of his kingdome continuall. But this promise is fulfilled in Iesus Christ, which many yeares after toke fleshe of the stocke of Dauid, and appointed the house of God, that is to say, the congregation of all Nations and peoples, whose kingdome (as the Angell testifieth) shall haue none ende. Besides this promise, to put all things out of doubt, he added an othe, whereof Peter in this place maketh mention, and which is expressed in the scriptures. For here vnto appertaineth that which we reade Psal. 89. I haue sworne once by my holynesse that I will not fayle Dauid. His seede shall endure for euer; and his seate is lyke as the sunne before me. He shall stand fast as the moone, and as the faithfull witnesse in heauen. &c. And againe. The Lorde hath made a faithfull othe vnto Dauid, and he shall not shrinke from it. Of the fruite of thy body shall I set vpon thy seate. And meete and convenient it is that we should adde here vnto, that which is read of the Priesthode of Christ; confirmed with the othe of God. For Dauid prophesying hereof sayth: The Lorde hath sworne and will not repent him: Thou art a Priest for euer after the order of Melchisedech. Where therefore Dauid was instructed with such and so many promises of God, it is easie to perceyue, that this ought to be vnderstanded of the true Melsias, which is the verie sonne of Dauid, because they are more excellent and high mysteries, than can fall out eyther vpon Dauid, or any of his children. But before we leaue this place, two things are to be noted.

First, we are taught that the auncient fathers were not altogether ignorant of Christes mysteries, and specially those which concerne his death and resurrection: In dede we must confesse that a more full knowledge hereof was reserued vnto the time appointed. But to denye Antiquitie, the whole knowledge of Christ were to rashe a part, because we knowe Christ testifieth of Abraham, that he reioyced to see his daye, that he sawe it and was gladd. And as we sayde erewhyle, he sayth Moyses and the Prophetes prophesied of his mysteries. This might be proued by authoritie of elder promises, and the bookes of the Prophetes abundantly, if neede so were. But let it suffice vs to learne this, namely, that the bookes of the olde Testament appertaine to vs also; which thing manye now a dayes ouer boldly vse to denie. For it is euident, that in them the knowledge of Christ is conteyned. Therefore we must confesse that they appertaine to vs also, vntill we will reiect the knowledge of Christ, as nothing belonging vnto vs. How much better doth Paule who sayth: Whatsoeuer things are written before time, are written for our learning, that through pacience and comfort of the Scriptures we might haue hope. Adde here vnto that which he sayth in the seconde Epistle to Timothie. Cap. 2.

The next thing worthy to be obserued in this place, is howe God doth

bouche

boughsafe with an othe to confirme and establishe our redemption and saluation, which only is included in Christ our Lord. Howbeit the credite and authoritie of Gods worde alone, farre passeth any othe that can be made. Howbeit that high God stoupeth downe to our capacitie, bicause he would haue vs nothing doubt of our saluation. And he bounde not himselfe on this wise to Dauid only, but also to Abraham, as Paule sayth. For to him it is sayde. I haue sworne by my selfe (sayth the Lorde) bicause thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thine onely sonne. &c. Afterwarde this othe was repeated againe, where the Lorde sayd to Isaac: I will perfourme the othe which I sware vnto Abraham thy father. &c. And herebnto appertaine those earnest and solemne contestations of God the father, wherewith he beareth witnesse from heauen that Jesus Christ is his beloued sonne, for whose sake he is reconciled vnto vs. And the sonne himselfe bindeth his promise to vs by an othe, as often as he repeateth that verilye I saye vnto you so much vsed in the Gospell. These things serue much for our comfort, and instruction, we are taught to make much of Christ, and not to despyse the saluation which cometh by his merite, and is offered vs by preaching of the Gospell, as he commaunded. In time passed (as Paule sayth) they which had transgressed the lawe of Moyses, dyed without mercye vnder twoo or three witnessers. How much sorer shall he be punished, which treadeth vnder foote the sonne of God, and counteth the bloude of the newe Testament as an vnholly thing. &c. And Iohn the Apostle admonisheth vs earnestly hereof saying: if wee receyue the witnesse of men, the witnesse of God is greater which he testified of his sonne. He that beleueth in the sonne of God, hath the witnesse in himselfe. He that beleueth not God, hath made him a lyer, bicause he beleued not the recorde that God gaue of his sonne. &c. But what can be more horrible than to accuse God of a lye, which is both eternall truth, and also may so easily reuenge the contempt of himselfe: Furthermore, these things comfort vs asmuch in the conflict of temptations. Satan many times goeth about to call the certaintie of our saluation into doubt. But if we consider howe the same is sealed and confirmed, as it were by an othe, our fayth can not wauer. For God is true, and his worde endureth for euer.

Heb. 6.

Gene. 22.

Gene. 26.

Math. 3. 17.

Heb. 10.

1. Iohn. 5.

Isa. 40.

Whatsoever
was prophesied
of the
Messias is
fulfilled in
Christ.

By the res-
urrection
Jesus is
prooued to be
the Messias.
Rom. 1.

But Peter returneth to Christ, and proueth that in him whatsoeuer things Dauid before times prophesied of the Messias, are fulfilled. The end of all his sayings, is that men shoulde vnderstande howe Jesus of Nazareth was the sauour of the worlde that was promised. And of a manye of things which he might haue alledged, he speaketh only of the resurrection and ascension, bicause these two sufficed his purpose, and serued chiefly for the present cause and controuersie, which rose by sending of the holy ghost. We shall speake of eche of them in order.

He reherseth the article of the resurrection to proue Christ to be the sauour promised, which argumēt Paule vseth also. Of Peters words we may frame this argument: Dauid a great while liethens, prophesied of the Messias, that neither his soule should long abide with the other soules of them that were departed, nor that his bodye should suffer corruption, bicause God woulde rayse him from death: But this prophesie is fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Ergo, it is manifest that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messias and sauour. Touching the Maior, there is no doubt. Therefore Peter labourerth in prouing the Minor, the veritie whereof he confirmeth by the common testimo-

nye of the Apostles, of this thing (sayth he) wee bee all witnesses. Neyther might these witnesses in whome there were such euident tokens of the holy ghost, and of Gods working, be easily reiected or contemned of men in their right wittes. The Apostles vse oftentimes to proue Christ to be our sauour by his resurrection, bicause Satan through death, which happened by reason of sinne, had the rule and Lordship ouer vs. Neyther coulde we safely acknowledge Christ to be our sauour, except we were certaine that he had subdued the force of death.

In the meane season, we must diligently consider the loyaltie and trustynesse of Peter and the other Apostles. The Lorde chose them to be his witnesses, as we sayde in the first Chapter. They therefore perfourme the dutie of witnesses faithfully and boldly, without all feare of any perill. For in the citie of Jerusalem befoze a great assembly of people, they testifie that Jesus is risen againe from the deade, by the power of God, yet was there a farre other rumor spred abroad in that citie. For the souldiers, as is declared in the last of Mathew, being bribed with money by the Priests, bare witnesse that the Disciples by night had stollen the body of Jesus awaye. What a daungerous matter it was openly to gaine say these men, euerye one may easily iudge, seeing they had the authozitie of the Priests, and of Pylate the Romaine President to defende them. But the Apostles by faith in Christ, overcame all feare of daunger, and left all men an example to follow, which haue the testimonie of Jesus Christ committed vnto them.

By the ascension, Jesus is proued to be the Messias.

The other argument whereby he proueth Jesus to be the Messias promised, he taketh of Christes ascension. And this argument it seemeth he vseth chiefly, bicause of them which might thinke it a ridiculous matter to preach him to be a sauour, which coulde be seene no where amongst men. Which also is the error of the in these dayes, who thinke him not a sauour, vnlesse he will shew himselfe bodily vnto them. But Peter speaketh on this maner: He being exalted by the right hande of God, and hauing receyued of the father the promise of the holy ghost, hath shed forth this gift which you see and heare. This saying seemeth the obscurer, bicause for the breuitie thereof, it cannot be perceyued wherevnto it is to be referred. But the obscuritie is easily put awaye, if we ioyne therewith, the Oracle which Dauid vttered touching Christes ascension. For of this Oracle and those thinges that Peter sayth, we may frame an whole argument after this sort. Dauid prophesied that Christ shoulde not only rise againe from the deade, but also taught vs that he shoulde ascende into heauen. For so he sayth: Thou art gone vp on high, thou hast led captiuitie captiue, and hast giuen giftes vnto men. This thing as also the other befoze, is fulfilled in Christ. For he after he was risen againe, being exalted by the mighty right hande of God, ascended vp into heauen, we looking on, and poured vpon vs the spirite which he obteyned of God the father: which spirit hath wrought in vs these giftes of tongues, which you doe see and heare. Therefore it is manifest, that this is the Messias. Further, no man must be offended for that he saith Christ receyued the spirite of his father, as though he were not of lyke power with the father. For Peter speaketh this of Christes humanity, wherein Christ confesseth that his father is greater than he. Although in an other place againe he saith, his father and he bee both one, that is to say, in respect of his diuinitie. And Christ himselfe very trimly loseth this knot, speaking of

Psal. 68.

of the sending of the holy ghost, in this wise: He shall glorifie me, for he shall receyue of mine, and shall shewe vnto you. All thinges whatsoever the father hath, are mine. Therefore sayde I vnto you, that he shall take of mine, and shew vnto you. &c. When the comforter is come whom I will sende vnto you from the father, euen the spirite of truth which proceedeth of the father, hee shall testifie of me. &c. But least any man might suppose that the things spoken of Christes ascention, were to be vnderstanded of Dauid, or would call them in question, he aunswereth them by another testimony, saying: For Dauid is not ascended into heauen, but he sayth: The Lorde sayde vnto my Lorde, sit thou on my right hande, vntill I make thy foes thy footestoolle: This argument consisteth of two pointes. First, Dauid ascended not into heauen: Ergo, these thinges ought not to be vnderstanded of Dauid. He denieth that Dauid is ascended into heauen, not because he thinketh him to be reckoned in the number of the damned, but speaketh of his bodye, which (as was beforesayd) was consumed into dust and earth. Touching the soule, this saying of Christ standeth in force: He that beleeueth in mee, hath lyfe euerlasting, and shall not come into iudgement, but is passed from death vnto life. The other argument standeth vpon the testimonye of Dauid, who sheweth that these thinges ought not to be vnderstanded of himselfe, but of Christ which shoulde be borne of his stocke. For in the Psalme. Cr. he sayeth: The Lorde sayde to my Lorde. &c. which place is so clere and so vndenyable, that Christ thought good to vse it against the Scribes. In the meane season we are taught by Peters example that the Scriptures ought to be expounded by conference of other places, least, standing rashly vpon some one place, we gaine say many other, which thing is the cause of many errors in the Church.

It is to be marked how vnto Christes ascention into heauen, he ioyneth the sending of the holy ghost. This doth he very prudently, and in order. For hereby he teacheth vs that though Iesus Christ haue taken his body out of this worlde, yet ought he not to be contemned. For he hath not for all that, cast of the care of the Church, but by his spirite is present with the same, by the which spirit he worketh more effectually in the mindes of those that be his, than befoze he did when he was conuersant with vs in body: wherefoze he sayth vnto the Disciples, that it is expedient for vs that he leaue the worlde, and go vnto the father. For so place shoulde be giuen to the holy ghost, which we coulde not haue so long as we did sticke to his bodily presence. And surely, after that Christ had giuen his bodye vpon the aultare of the Crosse for the life of the worlde, and had by the rayling vpon thereof againe, ouercome death, there was no more for his body here to doe vpon earth. It remayned therefore that by his glorious ascention, he should open the gates of heauen, which our sinne had shut against vs, and should become a pledge for vs in heauen, whereby we might be assured of the inheritance & possession of heauen. Therfoze Christ caried his body into heauen, and set it on the right hand of his father, & hath sent vnto vs being here on the earth (to vse Tertullians terme) his holy ghost to be his vicare or substitutz. By the operatio of him, he regenerateth vs through the immortal seede of the word of God, to be the sonnes of God. By him he teacheth vs and comforteth vs. The same is the earnest or gage of our saluation. Through the encouragement, we crie Abba father. By him it commeth to passe,

Iohn. 16.

Iohn. 15.

Iohn. 5.

Math. 22.

Christes absence in body, is no damage to the beleeuing.

Iohn. 16.

In his booke entituled, the prescriptions against heretikes.

Iohn. 3.

1. Peter. 1.

Iohn. 14-15.

2. Cor. 1. 5.

Ephes. 1.

Rom. 8.
Gala. 4.

pasſe, that Chriſt dwelleth in vs, and we in him. All which things, ſithens Chriſt worketh in vs moſt effectuallye by his ſpirite, there is no cauſe we ſhoulde complaine of the abſence of his body, which is reſident in heauen for our healthes ſake. And they that require the preſence of his bodye, and deſire to haue it ſhewed on earth, ſeeme to me little mindefull of the admonitions which are read in the. xxiij. of Mathew.

What maner
of kingdome
Chriſtes
kingdome is.

Iohn. 18.

Alſo Peter deſcribeth the kingdome of Chriſt with the wordes of Dauid, which it behoueth vs oftentimes diligently to conſider. The firſt point herein is, how he ſayth Chriſt is exalted by the right hande of God, and aſcended into heauen. Therefore his kingdome is heauenly, not of this worlde, as himſelfe confeſſed before Pylate. In deepe all power is giuen vnto him in heauen and in earth, but not to rule after the maner of Princes in this worlde, in whoſe reignes muſt needes fall out vncertaine and vntable entercoure of matters, becauſe they labour to obtayne kingdomes by the vncertaine and vaine power of the fleſh. We are alſo taught that we muſt not ſeake for worldly goodes in the kingdome of Chriſt, ſuche as are riches, honours, pleaſures, frienſhip of the worlde, and others of like ſort. They are eternall, and celeftiall goodes, which God the father hath giuen vs in Chriſt. Therefore we ought altogether to be buſied in ſtudying for them.

The right
hand of God.

Iohn. 3.

Iohn. 5.

Then he teacheth vs that Chriſt ſitteth at the right hande of God: by the which phraſe of ſpeech, both a certaine place is appointed of beatitude and bliſſe, and alſo an equall power of kingdome or empire with God the father. For the father loueth the ſonne, and hath giuen all thinges into his handes. He alſo commaundeth all men to honour the ſonne, euen as they honour the father. Wherevnto alſo this worde ſitting belongeth, whereby is expreſſed the maiestie of Chriſt in his reigne, and the ſure and vnmoueable power of his kingdome. Laſt of all, he ſayth, that all his enemies ſhall be ſubdued, and become his footſtoole. Chriſt is therefore a victorious king, and an inuincible vanquiſher of his enemies. Satan is the capitaine and ſtandebearer of them all, who was threatened with death long ſithens by the firſt promiſe of ſaluation that was made in Chriſt, when God ſayd:

Gene. 3.

Iohn. 12. 16.

Rom 8.

1. Cor. 15.

Pſal. 2.

The ſeede of the woman ſhall treade downe the ſerpentes heade. And Chriſt teacheth vs that he is alreadye iudged, and caſt out. In like maner it is as playne that ſinne is overcome. For God (ſayth Paule) ſent his ſonne, and hath condemned ſinne by ſinne, that is to ſay, by the ſacrifice of his ſonne, offered vpon the aultar of the croſſe for ſinne, he hath put awaye the guilt or treſpaſſe of ſinne, and hath taken awaye the power and force thereof, that it ſhall hereafter not hurt vs. But ſinne being put away, it is euident that death alſo muſt be vanquiſhed which fought againſt vs by none other weapon than the ſting of ſinne. Therefore all the power of hell is trulye ſubdued by Chriſt. He alſo ouercommeth the worlde, and tyrants with all the rable of the reprobate. For we reade that it hath bene long ſince decreed by the father that they that will not be gouerned by the wholeſome worde of his ſonne, ſhall be bruſed and broken to poulder with his rod of yron. Neither want there examles of dayes longe paſſed and nowe preſent, which teach vs what notable victories and triumphes Chriſt atchieueth of the enemies of his Church. Let vs learne therefore to acknowledge this king, and not to feare this worlde, which when it rageth moſt, is neareſt to de-

ſtruction,

struction, and is able to doe nothing against them whome Christ taketh charge of, against whome the gates of hell are not able to preuaile. And although we suffer afflictions in the worlde, let vs be encouraged with hys saying, where he promyseth that he hath ouercome the worlde, and that wee shall haue peace in him.

But let vs see the ende of this Sermon which Peter inferreth in these wordes: Therefore let all the house of Israell knowe for a suretie, that God hath made the same Iesus whom you haue crucified, Lorde and Christ. This is a very brieft, but yet a graue sentence, and verpe Apostolyke, euery worde whereof is able to minister an argument, and matter of a long sermon. But bicause we shall euery where haue occasion to speake more at large of these things, we will in fewe wordes note vnto you, what Peter meaneth by this saying. First he speaketh to all the house of Israell. In the name of the house, he comprehendeth all sortes and degrees of men, teaching vs that Christ is the vniuersall sauour of all men, with whom there is no respect of persons. And this is no light or slender token of the goodnesse of God, that to a most corrupt people, and yet embued with the bloud of Christ, he doth vouchsafe to promise all saluation in his sonne. Furthermore, let them knowe for a suretie, sayth he. Ergo, our saluation in Christ is certaine, and such as a man may safely trust to, for he cannot deceiue, which is the very truth it selfe. Thirde, he sheweth what all men ought to know: that God hath made this Iesus of Nazareth, Lord and Christ. He calleth him Lord bicause he is our redeemer. For, who is ignorant that redemers haue a certayne rule or Lordship ouer them, whome they haue eyther redeemed with their money, or with perill of their lyfe: For this cause he sayeth in the Prophete: I am the Lorde: This is my name, and my glorie will I giue to none other. He calleth him Christ, that is to say, annointed, bicause he is a King and a Priest. For it is playne by the Scriptures, that in the old time, kings and priests were bled to be annointed. And concerning the office of a King we spake somewhat before, whereunto also belongeth the name of a Redemer or Lord. Surely, Christ maketh lawes as a king: according to them he gouerneth the citizens of his kingdome, and defendeth & enricheth them most liberally with heavenly treasure. He is also a priest. For both in times past he taught, & at this day doth teach vs by the ministry of that word, wherof he is the Authoꝝ in his Church. And he hath made a full satisfaction by the sacrifice of his body, once offered vpon the crosse, for the sinnes of all the worlde. And as whyle he was once vpon the earth, he prayed for vs: so euen at this day he appeareth before God for vs a faithfull high Priest and an aduocate. Therefore he is in dede Christ, or the annointed of God. And it is euident that they commit horrible sinne, which reiect him, and appoint them other Lordes, Kinges, Priestes, and Redemers. But as Peter in the beginning of his treatie of Christ, admonisheth them of their wickednesse committed against him: so he concludeth his sermon with mention of him, declaring that he talketh of him whome they crucified. We may easily iudge the heynousnesse of the offence, by the things which he so singularly commendeth in Christ. And he vpbraideth them herewith for none other cause, but for that he woulde enflame them, being pricked with the conscience of their sinne, to embrace Christ, & their saluation, as shall appeare by the successe thereof in the sermon folowing.

Luke

Math. 16.

Iohn. 16.

The conclusion of Peters sermon.

Isa. 42.

Heb. 2.
1. Iohn. 2.

Luke hath giuen vs a biewe of the Apostles preaching. Peter comprehendeth in these fewe words all the articles of the Christian fayth. He hath spoken of God the father, creator of all thinges. He hath spoken of the sonne of God, which was made man of the stocke of Dauid, and therefore in unitie of person ought to be acknowledged for verie God and man. He hath taught vs, that he died, was buried, descended into hell, rose againe, and ascended into heauen for vs, where he sitteth on the right hand of God the father, and shall come to be our iudge, what time hee shall put all his enemies vnder his fete: yea, he shall throwe them into the lake burning with brimstone. He hath shewed vs that the holye ghost is come, being sent from him to gouerne his Church and all the faithfull. Finally, he hath proued that this Iesus is the Lorde and sauour, in whome remission of sinnes, resurrection of the fleshe, and lyfe euerlasting is purchased for all beleeuers. Here is no worde spoken of our satisfactions, nothing of priuate absolution, auricular confession, pardons, purgatorie, and such like wares. Let vs therefore keepe the simplicitie of the Apostles doctrine, and let vs embrace Iesus Christ with stedfast fayth, that by him we maye be saued, to whome be all blessing, honour, power, and glorie for euer. Amen.

The. xvij. Homelie.

WHEN they hearde this, they were pricked in their heartes, and sayde vnto Peter, and the other Apostles: ye men and brethren, what shall we doe? Peter sayde vnto them: Repent you of your sinnes, and bee baptised euery one of you, in the name of Iesus Christ, for the remission of sinnes: and ye shall receyue the gift of the holye ghost. For the promise was made to you, and to your children, and to all that are a farre of, euen as many as the Lorde our God shall call.

Thus farre hath Luke rehearsed the first Sermon of the Gospell, that Peter made at Ierusalem, after the receyuing of the holy ghost. The content thereof was, that Iesus of Nazareth, whome the Jewes crucified, was Christ, and the promised redeemer of mankind. But where it was Peters purpose not only to teach that, but also (as he was once tolde) to catch men aliue, and to winne them to Christ, therefore he set the heynous wickednesse of their sinne against Christ plainely before their face. For in the beginning of his treatise of Christ, he sheweth howe they crucified him, whome God by many myracles declared to be his sonne, and the sauour which he had promised. After this, gathering all that he had spoken of Christ into a short summe, he sheweth agayne that they nayled him to the crosse, and leauing this in their mindes as a sting, he concludeth his sermon. Howbeit the successe of the matter declareth that these thinges were spoken by Peter, not of desire to reprove them, but for their health and saluations sake: which successe Luke now describeth, leauing also a notable example, wherein the true way of attayning to saluation by Christ, is perfectly declared. This place therefore is worthy to be diligently considered, for the more profite wherof to be had, we shall speake of every

euery part thereof in order. first the Euangelist speaketh of the hearers. And after that he declareth how Peter further traueyled with them.

Touching the hearers, he sheweth what effect Peters sermon had. When they hearde this (sayth he) they were pricked in their heartes, and sayde vnto Peter, and the other Apostles: ye men and brethren what shall we doe? He attributeth two things vnto them. first, they are pricked in heart. He vnderstandeth the terrours of conscience which rose in them by the acknowledging of their sinne, and by the feeling or feare of the wrath of God in them. With these must we beginne, if we will take any profite by preaching of the worde. For as long as we liue carelesse in sinne, and are touched with no feeling of our sinnes, nor feare of the iudgements of God: we can not earnestly thinke of the waye of saluation, as men that iudge the care thereof vnprofitable and superfluous. And bicause this fault cleaueth to vs by corruption of nature, but being delighted with the enticementes of sinne, acknowledge not our selues for sinners: it is necessarye that our sinnes be reprovued, and accused by the worde of God, which thing Christ declareth to be one of the first workes of the holy ghost. By reason wherof, the worde of the Gospell is called a sworde and the light. For being sharper than any two edged sworde, it entreth through euen vnto the deuiding a sunder of the soule, and the spirite, and of the ioyntes and the marrowe, and is a discerners of the thoughts, and of the intents of the heart, and setteth them not only before our selues, but before others to beholde. And that this is a thing necessarye, we are taught not onely by the expresse worde of God, but also by the example of Gods elect, to speake nothing in the meane season of the filthye children of the world, which cannot repent. Surely Dauid, although he were a man euen according to Gods owne minde, yet did he not acknowledge his grievous sinnes of adulterie, manslaughter, and manye such vices as followed them, till he was reprovued of the Prophete, by the worde of God. And then he beginneth to crie out: I haue sinned against the Lorde. Againe: I acknowledge my faults, and my sinne is euer before me. My bones are vexed, and my soule is also sore troubled. There is no health in my flesh bicause of thy displeasure: neither is there any rest in my bones by reason of my sinne. And such like as are read in the Psalme. li. vi. xxxviij. and in other places. And the lyke we may see euen in our owne sinnes. There were now fiftie dayes and more gone, since the death of Christ. And how many were there at Jerusalem of them, that cried the bloude of Christ be on vs, & on our children, which shewed any token of repentance? But rather liued carelesse, & out of doubt had perished, if god had not shaken that carelesnesse of fro their mindes. For they being prouoked by Peters sermon, begin now at length to be pricked in their hartes, to tremble, and to thinke of their saluation. We must saye the same euen of our selues, if we will confesse the truth. They therefore are greatly deceyued, which will not haue sinnes rebuked by the worde of God, and crie out that it belongeth not to the dutie of Ministers to be busied in reprehending of sinne. Such men finde sometime dumbe dogges, which frame their doctrine according to their lustes: but then is that saying of the Prophete fulfilled, that the sworde of the Lorde commeth vpon the carelesse, and the bloude of them that perish shall be required at the handes of the flattering preachers.

The effect of
Peters ser-
mon.

Heb. 4.
Iohn. 3.

Ezech. 3. 33.

Let the con-

To this pricking of heart and terrour of conscience, is added an other thing,

U. i.

un-
der-
hearted,
some counsell
of the worde
of God.

Ezech. 18.

I sa. 61.

Math. 11.

Peters coun-
saile.

Repentance.

Leuit. 26.

Deut. 32.

Math. 3.

thing, that is to say, they seeke counsell at Peter and the Apostles, howe to be deliuered from their sinne, and to be restored againe to Gods fauour. And this is no lesse necessary than the first, whereof we spake euen nowe. For it is manifest that the berpe wicked are compunct and stricken sadde with the worde of God, and the accusing of their sinne. But as all thinges worke to the best in the elect: so the wicked take occasion on euerye side to offende the more grievouslye, as we see in this place it cometh to passe. For where their sinnes are openlye detected, eyther through impatient fiercenesse they rise against the worde of God, and will not seme to haue sinned, wherof we haue examples in Achab, and afterwards in the Priests of the Jewes: or else turning them to their owne workes, they seeke by them howe to satisfie the iustice of God, and to auoyde his wrath. And when they can see nothing but the heynousnesse of sinne, and the horrible wrath of God, then begin they to crie out with Caine: My wickednesse is greater than can be forgiuen, and so at length with Iudas, come to an vnhappy ende. We must therefore after the example of these men, go farther, and not sticke in the bitter terrors of conscience. We must take counsell of the thing whereof our terrour riseth, that is to say, of the word of God, which (as Pelias did sometime with his Jaueing against Telephus) both woundeth our consciences, and maketh them whole againe. Neyther must we here be so afrayde with the grievousnesse of sinne, that we must thinke our selues forlorne and past hope. For this sentence of God remayneth still in his full strength, which sayth: I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that hee conuert and liue. And Christ our Lord doth not only promise, that they that seeke shall finde, but also professeth that he is a Physician for such as are sicke in conscience, and in euery place biddeth them that traueyle and are heavy laden, to come vnto him. And we must thinke it was not without the secret instinct and working of God, that they whose handes as yet reeked with the bloude of the sonne of God, were the first that heard the Apostle preach. For God in this doing woulde haue vs perswaded, that the merite of Jesus Christ, and the liberalitie of his goodnesse, coulde not be counterpeysed or outweyed with any sinnes, so that we woulde cleaue vnto him by faith. But let vs heare Peters short and swete counsaile.

Repent you, and be you euery one baptized in the name of Christ, for the remission of sinnes: and ye shall receyue the gift of the holy ghost. For to you was the promise made. &c. He requireth of them thre things, but we will entreate onely of two at this present, of the thirde we will speake in the sermon following.

The first thing he dispatcheth in one worde: μετάνοια (sayth he) which the Latine interpreter translateth poenitentiam agite, that is, repent ye. He beginneth with that which the Scripture euery where exacteth. Moyses verily sheweth them which shoulde be punished for their offences, and for transgressing of the lawe, that their way to be saued, stode only in repentance. That this repentance is that thing which the Prophets chiefly vrged, is more manifest than needeth to be proued. John the Baptist, the first minister of the newe Testament, beginneth his preaching with the same. And Christ when he begunne to preache, cryed: Repent ye, for the kingdome of heauen is at hande. The same he commaunded the Apostles to preach not so little as once, as may be seene Math. 10. and Luc. 24. There-

fore

for Peter remembzng his maister and the commaundement which he gaue, biddeth them also to repent, and declareth that all he had hitherto sayd, touching their iniquitie, was not to thende that he would haue them perish thzough dyspayre, but that they should repent and be saued. Nowe, bicause the holy ghoist would haue this counsell wzitten and registred for our sake: something must be sayde of repentaunce, that we may learne also what is requisite for vs to doe.

The Latines saye that they doe pœnitere, that is to say, repent, whom it pzkethe or grieueth for that they haue committed, whereof is deriued this worde pœnitentia, repentance. The Grækes call it μετάνοια of this verbe μετανοειν, which signifieth the correcting or amending of the minde. For vs, with the Grækes signifieth that excellenter part of the soule, which the Latines call mens, the minde. Wherebpon the Grækes call that νοειν which the Latines call vnderstanding or perceyuing with the minde. We saye therefore that he doth μετανοειν, that is to repent, which vnderstandeth his error, and beginneth earnestlye to thinke of amendement. The Hebrues call it Theschubach, which is as much to saye, as conuerſion or turning. But bicause this conuerſion (as the nature of the Græke word signifieth) is referred to the minde, we maye briezely define repentance to be, a conuerſion or turning of the minde vnto God, from that which is euill and naught. The worde of God proueth this definition, speaking thus by Hieremie: If thou wilt returne thee, ô Israell, then returne vnto me. And in other places the Scriptures saye, they are gone from God which haue sinned. Whereof it followeth necessarily, that repentaunce, whereby we renounce sinne, ought to be called a returning and conuerſion vnto God. And the diligent consideration of this definition helpeth most grievous errors. For there are some which when they haue sinned, vse to turne vnto creatures, and to the workes of their owne hands, and so pollute themselves with a double fault, as the Lorde sayth, while they forsake the fountaine of the liuely water, and digge themselves pittes that will holde no water. There are another sort that imagine penance, to be a game or stage playe, and thinke it sufficient, if after the maner of the Jewish hypocrites, they light waxe candles, burne incense, go barefooted, weare hearecloth, and doe such lyke exercises, the superstition wherof long sithens hath bene condemned, by the preaching of the Prophetes. See Esay. i. 58. Hof. 6. Mich. 6. Zach. 7. But we shall well vnderstand þ all these things doe little profite vs, if we consider that repentance is a conuerſion or turning of the minde vnto God. Herevnto belongeth that which the Lorde speaketh. Turne vnto me with all your heart, in fasting, weeping and lamentation. Rent your heartes, and not your garmentes, and turne to the Lorde your God. &c.

Also we may learne hereby howe manye parts of penance there be, and wherein it consisteth. The chiefe poynt is the acknowledging of our sinne: for except we haue that, we can neyther be sorre for our sinne, nor turne from it vnto God. This knowledge is taken out of the glasse of the law, which doth not only detect open & notorious sinnes, but also discloseth the nature of sinne that lieth hidden in vs, as Paule teacheth. Terroꝝ of conscience, sorrow of minde & contrition, follow the knowledge of sinne, wherof we spake euen now. For it cannot be but he must altogether be afrayde, must sorrow, & be contrite in hart, that beholdeth in the law the countenance

What re-
pentaunce is.

Hierem. 4.

Hierem. 2.

Ioel. 2.

The partes
or branches
of repentaunce

Rom. 7.

of God, which is angry with the heynousnesse of his sinne. And such is the force of this contrition and sorrowe, that it extorteth and forceth vs to confesse our sinne, not in another mans eare (whereof there is neyther commaundement in all the Scripture, nor example) but euen vnto God himselfe, that we be miserable and sinnefull wretches, as Iohn the Apostle teacheth vs in his first Epistle, and first Chapter. To confession is ioyned inuocation, which by no meanes can be seperated from it. Nowe, of all these springeth a feruent desire of amendment of life, and not of life onely, (but as much as maye be) of our whole nature. For nowe a man beginneth to mortify his flesh, now he desireth to die to the world, and to be crucified with Christ. He is now wholly set on fire, with the desire of holynesse & innocencie. He burneth in the loue of righteousnesse and truth. He is wholly occupied in good works, the exercise wherof, he heareth comended of God, hauing in the meane while, no regard to them, which are prescribed by the superstitious traditions of men. Finally, because he knoweth, that all the fountayne of this euill, sprang of going from God and his worde, he laboureth to addresse himselfe againe wholly to the worde of God, and to all his lyfe after the rule of God. And this is no purpose or intent for a fewee of dayes only, but a permanent and a continuall, such as by reason of our continuall slippes and falles, is needfull euery day to be renewed. For, as the iust man falleth seauen times a daye, so hee vseth seuen times a daye to rise agayne.

Prouer. 24.

Hereby it appeareth what Peter would haue them to doe: verily, to acknowledge their sinnes, to feare the iudgement of God, to be sorry for their offences, to be contrite in hart, to confesse their faults vnto God, and to beseeche him of his grace, and finally to labour to amende their lyfe, to mortifie the flesh, to giue themselves to innocencie, holynesse, righteousnesse, and charitie. To this purpose the Prophete cryeth: Let the vngodly man forsake his owne wayes, and the vnrightheous his owne imaginations, and turne againe vnto the Lorde. &c. Let euery man thinke this is spoken to him, and compare his lyfe with these things, and it shall easily appeare what wayes he ought to take, and what to refrayne.

Isa. 55.

To be baptised in the name of Christ.

The seconde thing that Peter requireth, he expoundeth in these wordes: Bee you euery one baptised in the name of Iesus Christ, for the remission of sinnes. This precept seemeth to conteyne in it two things. For first, in that he will haue them to be baptised in the name of Christ, he sendeth them to Christ, and sheweth them that saluation and forgiveness of sinne is to be founde in Christ onely. So Christ commaunded them to preach, shewing them that remission of sinnes ought to be declared in his name. And it was necessarye, because of the Phariseyes doctrine, which taught that men were iustified by their owne workes, which opinion also manye holde in these dayes. And surely if Peter had required nothing but penance, he might seeme to haue consented to their doctrine. But seeing he sendeth them that repent vnto Christ, he teacheth vs plainly that we must of dutie repent, and yet that all desert of iustification is to be had in Christ only. Therefore whosoever maketh no mention of Christ in teaching of repentance, offendeth against the example of Peter. And so be they cause to the ignorant, to establish their owne righteousnesse, wherin they can finde no certaintie, nor soundnesse.

Luc. 24.

Next

Next, he speaketh of outward baptisme, which he commaundeth them to receiue, for forgiuenesse of sinnes. Which wordes are not so to be vnderstanded, as though outward baptisme washed vs from sinne: for it is euident that wee be cleansed from all our sinnes by the bloude of Iesus Christ. This is attributed to baptisme, because it sealeth in vs the benefite of purification, which is gotten vs by the bloude of Christ. Which thing we may see in Circumcision. For where Abraham was iustified by faith, he receyued Circumcision, as a signe of the righteousness of fayth. So they which are conteyned within the Testament of Christ, and be therefore iustified, receyue baptisme for remission of sinnes: that is to saye, the righteousness of God which he hath giuen vs in Christ, is sealed in them by baptisme. Wherefore, Peter by this maner of speech, assureth them of their saluation, and comforteth them by an argument deduced or taken of the ende of baptisme. In the meane season, because we be taken into the Church of God by baptisme, and are become professors of Christ, as people which vnder his conduct must fight agaynst this worlde, and the Prince thereof: Peter requireth further of them, a free and an open confession of their fayth in Christ. For Christ will haue no such worshippers as shall be ashamed of him. Howbeit the Jewes did openlye denye Christ, before Pylate, whyle they cried they had no King or Messias, beside Caesar. Wherefore it was necessary that they shoulde as freely confesse Christ, least they might be iudged stil to be of the number of the false runnagates. This could be done no way more commodiously than by baptisme, which Christ woulde haue administered to the ende, to get and bring him disciples, as may be read. Math. 28.

Nowe, if a man will compare the things together, which haue hitherto bene sayde: it will appeare after what order Peter taught the way of iustification and saluation. He began with rebuking of sinne, as we haue hard before. Then when he saw them pricked and contrite in hart, he requireth them to repent, by this meanes bringing them to some hope of grace and fauour. Then againe, least they should trust in the workes of penance, and leane vpon their owne righteousness: he sendeth them to the name of Christ, and to his merites. At length he commaundeth them to professe Christ openly, and to ioine themselues to his Church. This order of teaching we see the Apostles euerye where obserued, which they had learned of Christ their maister, as no man can deny. For thus he sayd a little afoze his departure from hence: It is necessary that repentance and forgiuenesse of sinnes shoulde be preached to all Nations in my name: Go ye therefore into all the worlde, preach the Gospell to all creatures, and bring me disciples from out all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the sonne, and of the holy ghost. Which things if a man compare with auricular confession, satisfactions, merites, pardons, peremindes, purgatory, and infinite such like, exacted of those that should doe penance: he shall finde they are farre wyde a sinder.

Furthermore, because Peter had to doe with them which felt themselues guiltie of such an heynous wickednesse, as had not bene seene the lyke, he comforteth them with a double promise, as is the maner of the Gospell, for feare they should be swallowed bp of desperation.

First, you shall receyue (sayth he) the gift of the holy ghost. He seemeth to speake of a peculiar gift of the spirite, such as in the time of the primitive Church,

To be baptis-
sed for for-
giuenesse of
sinnes.

1. Iohn. 1.

Rom. 4.

The confessio
of our faith
in Christ
necessary.
Marc. 8.

The order of
the doctrine
of iustificatio

Luc. 24.
Marc. 16.
Math. 28.

Peter com-
forteth with
promises.

The gift of
the holy ghost.

Church, & beleuers were endued with, either to speak with diuers tonges, or else to be notable in other myracles, as hereafter in the eight Chapter it shall appeare more plainely. For it behoued to haue the ministerye of the Apostles adozned with some singular giftes, to thende, men might the more easily be wonne vnto Christ. And although these giftes in these dayes for the most part be ceased: yet there remaine other more necessary effects of the spirite, through whose operation, the belæuing are regenerated, mortified, renewed, assured of their saluation, emboldened and confirmed in perils, so that they dare stoutly & without any feare, stand to the confession of the name of Christ. For it is the spirit of adoption which bleth to worke al these things in the children of God that they haue neede of in this world. This promise was able singularlye to comfort them whose consciences were afrayde by reason of sinne. For howe coulde they doubt to haue forgiveness of their sinnes, which heard they should haue the same spirit, that the Apostles had: In the meane season this promise serueth also for our instruction. For it teacheth vs that true belæuers and Christians cannot vtterly be destitute of the giftes of the holye ghost. There are diuers operations, and diuers gifts of the spirite (as Paule sayth) and we see that some excell other some therein. But there is not the meanest of them all that is vtterly boyde of the spirit, bicause they be not the members of Christ which haue not the spirite of Christ. Therefore saine is the profession of Christ, except we shewe and declare that we be quickened and gouerned by the spirite of Christ: which thing caused the Apostle to saye, that fayth is knowne by workes, and Christ commaundeth vs to followe his father in our doings.

Rom. 8.

Iacob. 2.

Math. 5.

The promise
of the olde
Testament.

Secondly, he alledgeth an auncient promise: To you (sayth he) was the promise made, and to your children, and to all that be a farre of, euen as many as the Lord our God shall call. These things are to be vnderstanded of the couenant & promises which were made in the olde Testament, the summe wherof may be seene: Genes. 17. yet doth Peter extend the same promises to those that are a farre of, that is, to the Gentiles, which as yet were straungers and alienes from the societie of the people of God, bicause he woulde the easilier induce and perswade them. For they which were bozne of Abraham coulde doubt no longer of Gods goodnesse, seeing they hearde the same extended also vnto the Gentiles. These things teache vs to what vse Gods promises serue, verily to confirme our wauering fayth in temptations and all other aduersities. But before we make an ende of our sermon, two things in these wordes are to be noted.

The promise
of saluation
belongeth to
infants also.
Gene. 17.

First, he sayth the promises appertayne not to the fathers only, but also to the children. The wordes of the couenant teache vs the same, where the Lorde sayth thus: I will make my bonde betweene mee and thee, and thy seede after thee in their generations, by an euerlasting Testament, that I may be God vnto thee, and vnto thy seede after thee. &c. Whereof we gather, that the infants of those that belæue, whome we cannot exclude from the name of seede, are as well contayned within the couenant of saluation, as are the elders and fathers. For the obiection of those that say, the wordes of God are only to be vnderstanded of that posteritie of Abraham, which when it was of age, was able to professe their fayth, is not ought to be of no authoritie. For it is euident that Isaac and Iacob were included in the couenant before they were bozne, as maye be seene. Genes. 17. 25. Rom. 9. And

Paule

Paule doubteth not to call those children holpe, which haue but one parent faithfull and a beleuer. Christ also plainly teacheth vs that the kingdome of God belongeth vnto children. Here the Bapistes and Anabaptistes errors are confuted, whereof, the one deny saluation and the fruition of God to children that die without baptisme: and the other keepe children from baptisme, whome Christ commaundeth to be brought vnto him.

Then next, declaring the promise of saluation, he maketh mention also of Gods vocation and calling, least any man might thinke the children of God were eyther bozne of the fleshe, or of the merite of their owne free will, and strength: for the children of the fleshe bee not the children of God, but the children of the promise. And it is not in mannes will or cunning, but in the mercy of God. Saluation is set before vs in Iesus Christ, and as the parable of the Gospell saith, the time of mariage approacheth, and all things are ready. But it is needefull that men shoulde be called and bidden, that they may come vnto the feast. Therfore God sendeth forth the preachers of his Gospell, whose voyce is gone throughout the worlde many yeares since. Howbeit, bicause they can doe nothing in the mindes of men, it is needefull they shoulde be drawne by God, and by the operation of his spirite, according to that saying of Christ: No man commeth vnto mee, except my father drawe him. And God according to his free and holy will worketh, and the winde bloweth where it will. By the which it is manifest, that our saluation dependeth vpon the mere fauour of God, which calleth whome he will, draweth whome he will, and maketh them like to the ymage of his sonne. In the meane season it is our dutie, being called, to aunswere, being drawne; not to pull backe, and being subiect to the Gospell, through the obedience of fayth, to make sure our vocation and election, as the Apostle teacheth.

This maye suffice for this time touching Peters counsaile of saluation, who sheweth them what waye to take, whose consciences are feared with the consideration of their sinnes. The residue behind remaining shal be intreated of in the next sermon. Let vs folow the holy ghosts counsell, which spake by the mouth of Peter. Let vs repent vs truly, let vs seeke whatsoever things belong to our saluation in Christ, let vs giue our selues wholly to him, and freely professe him. Let vs not breake our promise made to him in baptisme, but let vs liue a life worthe the name of Christ, and then we shall liue hereafter with him in heauen, to whome be blessing, honour, power and glozy for euer. Amen.

The.xviij.Homelie.

AND with many other wordes bare he witnesse, and exhorted them, saying: saue your selfe from this vntowarde generation. Then they that gladly receyued his preaching, were baptized: and the same daye there were added vnto them about three thousande soules. And they continued in the Apostles doctrine and fellowshippe, and in breaking of breade, and in prayers. And feare came ouer euery soule. And many woonders and signes were shewed by the Apostles.

1. Cor. 7.

Marc. 10.

The vocation
of saluation,
is of gods
free mercy.

Rom. 9.

Iohn. 6.

Iohn. 3.

2. Pet. 1.



The Apostle Peter so ordred his fyrst Sermon of the Gospell, that he earnestlye vpbayded his hearers with the grieuous and heynous offence that they committed against the sonne of God. But after they were ouercome with the conscience of their sinne, and sought counsayle howe to be saued, he gaue them both friendly and faithfull counsayle: shewing them that way of saluation, that all men in these dayes that are desirous to be saued, must likewise take. For he prescribed them to repent, and sendeth them to Christ, to be consecrated to him by externe and publike baptisme, that in his name they might obtayne remission of their sinnes, and the gift of the holy ghost. But bicause there were a great many, whose authoritie might pull them from the way of saluation, or at the leastwise greatly hinder them, he warneth them also of those persons, which is the first thing in this sermon, wherevnto afterwarde Luke ioyneth the effect and fruite that followed of the Apostles counsayle, with an elegant president of the auncient and primitive Church, all which are very worthy to be diligently considered. Of Peter, thus sayth the Euangelist: with many other woordes bare hee witnesse, and exhorted them saying: Save your selues from this vntowarde generation. The admonition going before might haue seemed sufficient, and verily it comprehendeth all the order of true saluation. But bicause it might seme an harde and weightie matter to forsake and cast away the auncient religion of their forefathers, and to embrace a new, hauing the example of many against them: it was necessary to vse other admonitions, wherein he sheweth that Peter vsed great earnestnesse, and passing vehemency. For he did not simply monishe them only, but also vsed many obtestations and exhortations. And this was the summe and ende of them all: To saue themselves from that vntowarde generation. By this worde sauing, he admonished them, that their saluation is in perill, which they coude not attaine to, except they woulde seperate themselves from such as they were.

First, let vs see of whome he speaketh. For although it might seme he spake of the whole nation of the Jewes, which was guiltie of Christs bloudshed: and was polluted with the greatest crime that coude be: yet chiefely was this name due to the Priestes and Scribes, who as it is euident, were the chiefe authoꝝ of all the calamities that were amonge that people. They were puffed up with the pryde of their gorgeous and holy titles and styles. For besides that they chalenged the common name of the children of Abraham, they thought also they only had the knowledge of the lawe, and they were taken of euery man as guides of the blinde, lightes to them that walked in darkenesse, instructoꝝ of the vnwise, and teachers of the vnlearned, as appeareth by Pauls wordes. But Peter with great plainnesse calleth them a naughtie, peruerse, and vntowarde generation, following the example of Iohn Baptist and Christ, who before that, had greeted them by the same names. For Iohn called them the generation of vipers. And Christ plainly called them, a naughtye and adulterous generation. Let no man impute this to euill speaking, or rayling, a thing farre vnfit and vnseemely for the holy spirite: for diuers weightie causes bryged

Peter

The vntowarde generation are the Priestes and Scribes.

Rom. 2.

Math. 3.

Math. 12. 46.

Iohn 8.

Peter to paint them out by these names. First, where they despised the faith of Abraham, which only maketh vs the children of God, and in the meane season chalenged to themselves, the names of his children: they ought not to be taken for any such. Next, because their authoritie was great with all men, for that they were in an office long before appointed of God, and gloried in that they succeeded most holpe men: it was needfull they should be reprovied, and knowne vnto all men for squarers from them, least any man should be deceyued with their glorious styles, and baunt of their succession. Therefore Peter doth wisely, godlyly, and boldly, in calling them a naughty and peruerse generation. For in so doing, he both admonisheth vs, that they ought to be auoyded, and putteth the simple out of feare and doubt, which thought it an heynous matter openly to forsake them.

By Peters example, we also in these dayes are taught what to doe. A great many suppose a bare and simple knowledge of the truth, is sufficient, whereof they vse marueylously to glory: amonge those that are desirous of the truth. And yet they are still conuersant with the wicked, and with the professed enemies of Christ: yea, they keepe company with the authors of false doctrine, and can not abide that the Ministers of the Gospell should openly reprove them. But it is plaine that Peter the Apostle was of a farre other iudgement: who would haue the faithful separate themselves from the wicked, and feareth not to note deceyuours, by the name of an vntowarde generation, contrary to the common opinion of all the people. He tooke example of Christ so to doe, which euery where biddeth vs to eschue false teachers, and teacheth vs that their company is pernicious and hurtfull. The same the other Apostles also did, as it is manifest, which thought not they had done their dutie, to point at the false teachers of their dayes with their fingers, but also warned vs of them, whome by inspiration of the holy spirite, they knewe shoulde come in the later age of the worlde, whereof we haue testimonies. 1. Timoth. 4. 2. Timoth. 3. and 4. 2. Thes. 2. 1. Iohn. 2. and 4. Therefore whosoener hath in these dayes the ministry of the Gospell committed to him, let him imitate the faithfulness and diligence of these men. Because it is euident the shepe are so foolish that they can scarce beware of the Wolfe when they are warned, yea, for hope of a little lucre, they will creepe into the mouthes of them: Let them therefore paint out in their colours, and terme by their true and proper names, all these deceyuers, and take no regarde to them which for priuate gaine, hold with them. Let other also learne to obey their faythfull aduertisements, and to flie the professed enemies of Christ, whose company if they auoyde not, they can not be taken for the members of Christ. Let them at the least be moued with feare of the daunger, which we knowe hangeth both ouer their heades and them that follow them. For they that refuse to come forth of Babilon, the mother of whozedome, shal taste of those plagues also which the Lorde hath ordeyned for hir.

We haue therefore Peters counsell touching the waye of saluation, wherevnto Luke ioyneth the notable successe that followed thereof. For he sayth: that they that gladly embraced his preaching, were baptized, and the same day there were added vnto them about three thousande soules. The godly writer in marueylous breuitie comprehendeth a great matter. For here is fulfilled that that Christ sayde vnto Peter, when he was called to be an

Æ. j.

Apostle:

Math. 7.
15. 23. 24.
Iohn. 10. &c

Apoc. 18.

The effect of
the Apostles
counsell.

Luc. 5.

Apostle: Hereafter thou shalt take men on lyue. For he which a little before was but a rude fisher, letting slippe the nette of the Gospell, bringeth three thousande people vnto the obedience of the faith in Christ, who both gladly receyued his preaching, and willingly continued in the same. This place teacheth vs two things very needefull to be knowne.

The preaching of gods worde is not in vayne.

Isa. 55.

First, we learne that godly and faithfull ministers doe neuer preach the worde of God in vaine, although many things seeme to stoppe and hinder the course thereof. This the Lorde witnesseth by his Prophete: Lyke as the rayne and snowe commeth downe from heauen, and returneth not thither agayne, but watreth the earth, maketh it fruitefull and greene, that it maye giue corne to the sower, and breade to him that eateth: so the worde also that commeth out of my mouth, shall not turne agayne voyde vnto mee, but shall accomplishe my will, and prosper in the thing whereto I sende it. We haue in this matter a moste manifest example hereof, where we maye also see things that might hinder the profite and fruite of Gods worde. A people of nature rebellious and stubborne, such as Moyses & the Prophetes describe and set forth. As many as were of any power & authoritie, were enemies to the doctrine. Great daunger and perill in receyuing the doctrine of the Gospell, bicause before this, as many as followed Christ, were excommunicated. The Apostles were rude, contemned, and despised persons, yet the worde of the moste high God driuen lyke a shower or storme with his winde or breath (which as Christ sayth, bloweth where it liketh) bursteth through all these stoppes and impediments. This ought to comfort vs in this age, that we despayre not of Christes Church, and the successe therof, notwithstanding we see so diuers enterprises and attemptes, euery where busily bent, and ment against the same.

Iohn. 9.

Iohn. 3.

The proper-
tie of faith,
and of the
elect.
Iohn. 10.

Math. 24.
Luc. 9.

Next, we are taught what the nature of faith is, and what the proper-
tie of Gods elect people is. For here are two thinges ascribed vnto them. One is, that they gladly embraced Peters sermon. For where the mindes of those that beleue, are drawne with the spirite of God, they streight way knowe his voyce, and the chiefe shepheards, and follow it. Neither haue they any greater pleasure than in the study of the worde of God, wherein they vnderstande that that most mercifull father, and the onely authoz of saluation, talketh with them. The other is, that Luke sayeth, they continued in the same, which is as necessarie a propertie as the first. For Christ sayeth: He that abydeth vnto the ende, shall be safe. But hee that setteth his hande to the plough, and looketh backward, is not meete nor woorthy of the kingdome of God. If we compare these thinges with the maners of our age, it wyll easily appeare howe vnhappy an age it is. For with many and continuall sermons can very fewe be wonne vnto Christ. And we maye see euen in them that haue professed Christ, eyther a negligent contempt of Gods worde, or else some detestable lightnesse, whereby vpon enery trifling occasion they dishonestly starte from the truth that they haue knowne and professed.

The fourme
and order of
the primitive
Church.

But let vs returne to Luke, which in fewe words setteth out the forme of the primitive Church, the maners, the rites, and the exercises of the same, the chiefe vse whereof is to learne vs to knowe the order of the Apostolike Church, and wherein the same is in these dayes decayed, to restore and reforme it thereafter againe: They continued (sayth he) in the A-

postles

postles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of breade, and in prayers. He rehearseth foure things, of euery which we haue something to say.

In the first place the Apostles doctrine: what that was, it shall othertwheres appeare. It was Christes commaundement, that they should teache all Nations, those things that they had before learned of him. He commaunded them to preach repentance and forgiveness of sinnes in his name. In the which articles it is plaine, the knowledge of the whole law and of Gods will, and all the maner of our saluation is contayned. A taste of this doctrine we sawe in Peters sermon gone before. And their writings abundantly declare, that they obserued this forme of doctrine in all places. Therefore the faithfull of the primitive Church abode in that order and trade of doctrine which we see at this daye comprehended in the booke of the Apostles: and in these is no mention made of any mans traditions, and inuentions. Luke placeth doctrine first, because by teaching, the Church is gathered together, and by the same (as Paule declareth) cometh sayth, and all the beleuings are borne againe of the immortall and eternal word: touching which point see Rom. 10. 1. Pet. 1 &c. Here we learne that the chiefe care in the Church ought to be for doctrine. For where through it (as was sayde euen now) we be gathered into the vnitie of sayth: it cannot be chosen, but they must fowly and miserably be scattered, that admit diuers and vncertaine doctrines. Those be diuers and vncertaine, which depend and consist of the will of man. Wherefore it behooueth vs to holde and retaine the Apostolike doctrine, which they learned at Christes mouth, and which they being illuminated with the holpe ghost, taught to all Nations vpon the earth. This doctrine is both certaine, plaine, perfite, and autentike, so that it needeth neyther mannes inuention nor authoritie, eyther to commend or confirme it. John speaking of this doctrine, sayth: Let that which you hearde from the beginning remayne in you. And Paule will not haue himselfe belaued, no nor an aungell coming from heauen, if he dare to preach anye other Gospell or waye of saluation, than the Apostles haue taught. This reproveth the vncoustant wethercockes of these dayes, who haue a delight to dally with doctrine and religion, and dare euery daye alter and chaunge it at their pleasure, and for priuate lures sake, as we reade Ieroboam vsed to doe. As though the vse of religion and doctrine, were to none other ende, but to keepe men in awe, as it were, with bayne buggebeggers. Here are they also reprovued, which like children suffer themselves to be ledde with euery blast of doctrine, contrary to the precept of Paule. For the chiefe marke of those that be faithfull and true Christians, is a faithfull and constant keeping of the Apostles doctrine. Whosoener rashly forsaketh this doctrine, he must needs confesse that he knoweth not at all what the Church of Christ is.

Secondly he sayeth that they continued in communicating, he vnderstandeth the beneficence and liberalitie they vsed toward the poore: according to that saying of the Apostle: To doe good, and to distribute forget not. He ioyneth this next vnto doctrine, because that by it (as was euen now sayde) we are vnited vnto Christ our heade, as members of one bodye. Therefore they that be in this wise vnited together, must count eche others aduersitie, and prosperitie as their owne: wherevnto it seemeth Christ had a respect, where he shewed that loue was the cognisance and

1. The doctrine of the Apostles.
Math 28.
Luc. 24.

1. Iohn. 2.

1. Reg. 12.

Eph. 4.

2. Communicating of goodes.
Heb. 13.

Iohn. 13.

badge of his Disciples. And this is a singuler and worthy prayse of beneficence, to haue the next place vnto doctrine, among the exercises of the Church. Whereby we may easily perceiue what to thinke of them who are touched with no pitie of their needy brethren, but smothering in wealth themselves, care not though all other want, so they may enioye the riches and delights of this world. But bicause we meane hereof to speake moze hereafter, let this little for this time suffice.

3. The breaking of bread
or receyuing
together.

Thirldy, he reciteth breaking of bread: by the which he vnderstandeth the mysticall supper of our Lorde and sauour Jesus Christ. He bleseth this name, for that in the supper the bread is publikely and solemnely broken, partly to set forth the memorie of the Lordes death, and partly to put vs in minde, that we were the causers of the death of Jesus Christ, seeing it was necessary he shoulde suffer and die for our sinnes. He maketh mention onely of the supper, not for that he barreth baptisme out of the Church, but bicause he had spoken thereof before, where he sayde they were baptized. And he speaketh of those which were alreedy receiued into the Church, not of their children, and those that shoulde afterwarde professe Christ, wherof we gather that baptisme ought not to be yterated, bicause it is sufficient to be once receyued into the Church of Christ. Another reason why he spake of the supper was, bicause Christ ordeyned it to be a solemn memoriall and remembrance of his death, which for this cause ought to be the oftner celebrated. Marke here in the meane while, the simplicitie of the primitive Church, which being contented with the rites and sacraments deliuered by the Lord, neither durst deuise any newe, ne yet set forth the olde with any newe ceremonies, for feare of prescribing Christ. And although Luke expresse not the rites, and order of the mysticall supper, as they bled it: yet there is no doubt but they had a respect to Christes institution, bicause Paule afterwarde confesseth, that he deliuered vnto the faithful that order which he receyued of the Lorde, and reuoketh them which had swarued from the same to the obseruation and keeping thereof. These things ought they to haue marked, which glorying in the name of the Gospel, are so bolde as to chaunge and alter the maner of the Lodes supper, ordeyned by Christ himselfe. For to saye nothing of the lightes, the riot in vestiments, the pieuishe gesturing, and infinite such like, which they (perhaps of a good zeale) thought to commend the authoritie of the supper the moze with: this me thinketh, can not be pardoned, that they haue taken from the supper, the breaking of bread, whyles they make the paces of the mysticall bread rounde, before they come to the supper, and put them whole into the mouthes of the receyuers. If they take away this breaking, what will they leaue vs wherby to remember the death of Christ, or to admonish vs of our sinnes, and of repentance: considering the breaking of bread was of such authoritie in the primitive Church, that vnder that name they comprehended the whole supper of the Lorde. Therefore we must holde fast the auncient simplicitie, which if any man dyslike, certes, he to boldly contemneth the authoritie of Christ, by whose institution the same was commended.

4. Praying.

Last of all, he speaketh of prayers, which we suppose ought to be vnderstanded of publike prayers. For Luke meaneth not to tell what euery man did priuately at home in his owne house, but what the publike exer-

cises

cises of the Church were. He did not thinke it good to forget publyke prayers which Christ commended vnto vs by a notable promise, where he sayth: If two of you agree in earth, vpon any maner of thing, whatsoeuer they desire, they shall haue it of my father which is in heauen. And we reade in Ioel the Prophete, that publyke prayers are greatly commended in times of affliction. For where God reioyce in the vnanimitie of the godly and faithfull, he cannot chuse, but graunt the prayers of a great many which with one hart and mouth (as it were) burst in vpon him. And if we diligently consider the manifolde hazardest on euery side of vs, it shall appere they are not without a cause commended vnto vs. Wherefore their blindness, and slouthfulnesse is greatly to be bewayled, which both priuately, in their owne house call very seldome vpon God, and openly despise and neglect the publyke prayers of the Church, yea, rascallye deride the holye assemblies which the Church hath ordeyned, for preaching of the worde, and for publyke prayers.

Here therefore we haue the exercises of the primitive Church, which no man, I thinke, will denie to be both Apostolike and Christian. That Church continued in the Apostolike doctrine, by meane whereof it was gathered together, and by baptisme. It did exercise mutuall and publyke beneuolence and liberalitie towardes all Nations. It obserued the order of the mysticall supper, as Christ did institute it. It continued stedfastlye and dailye in praying. Whosoener endeouour in these dayes, thus to doe, ought to be taken for the members of the Church, and for Christians, although they be hated and despised of all the worlde beside. And whosoener we see estranged & deuied from these wayes, it is impossible they should eyther be Christians or Apostolike. The worshippers of the sea of Rome, glory now a dayes in the title of the Church, & condemne vs of heresie, because we are departed from them. But they must first proue that the name of the Church, ought to be with them. If they deserue the title of the Church, why neglect they the Apostles doctrine? why doe they persecute it with fire and sword? why lode they them with newe traditions, whom Christ hath made free from the yoke of the lawe, by the price of his owne bloude? why doe they riotously spende the goodes of the Church, giuen by the liberalitie of Princes, and priuate men, to relieue the poore with, and for the most part bestowe them on ruffians, iesters, and buggered boyes? why prophane they the supper of the Lorde, and turne it into a sacrifice for the quicke and the deade? why haue they in steade of publyke prayers, brought in a roaring and yelling of an outlandishe tongue? These things might be dilated at large, so that all men might see they are most vnworthy the name of the Church. But it sufficeth to diligent hearers of the worde, to giue but an occasion to consider further hereof. In the meane season, let none amongst vs that glory in the name of the Gospel, thinke all is well at home, seeing that in vs also remaine many things to be amended. The doctrine of the Apostles soundeth in our Churches, but how little a great many set by it, the thing it selfe declareth. The studie of charitie and distribution is wared colde. The vse of the supper with some is farre degenerated from the primitive simplicitie, with other some it is made little account of. What negligence reigneth in publyke prayers, maye be iudged by the Church assemblies, to the which verie fewe vse to come, and they seldome

Math. 18.

What defended
the church.

Psal. 105.

1. Iohn. 5.

seldome times. Wherefore we also must frame our selues better to the primitive order, if we also will not in vaine bragge of the Church.

But some maye marueyle by what succour or defence the primitive Church coulde line in safetie amonge suche professed enemies in so bloud-thirstie a Citie: This Luke declareth, saying: feare came vpon euery soule, and manye woonders and signes were shewed by the Apostles. The myndes therefore of the wicked were bridled with a certaine secret feare. They sawe the marueylous boldenesse of the Apostles, and their bolde libertie of speach. They sawe them who not long before were enemies of Christ suddenly chaunged. They sawe signes and woonders wrought by the Apostles. They marueyle therefore and are amazed. Adde herevnto the spirite of Christ, which as he worketh in the elect, a childely feare, hope, fayth, and obedience, so he horribly troubleth and feareth the wicked with the conscience of their sinne. They feare therefore to beginne any thing against the greene springth of Christ. So God can defende his sheepe in the midst of the wolues. For we depend not vpon the will or power of our enemies, but vpon the counsell of Gods providence. With this we reade the Patriarches sometime were defended among the bloudy Nation of the Chanaanites, the Lorde thundering in their mindes: Touch not mine annoynted. &c. With the same succour and defence is the Church garded also in these dayes, wherewith Christ hath promised allwaies to be present. These things ought to stirre vs vp, and to embolden vs. We haue professed in our baptisme to serue Christ. Let vs giue our selues to such things as become Christians, and let vs not feare the enterprises of the worlde. For fayth which is our victorie, ouercommeth the worlde. With this, let vs embrace Christ truely, who being our Capitaine and Protector, we shall be able to overcome. To him be blessing, honour, power, and glory for ever. Amen.

The. xix. Homelie.

AND all that beleued, kept themselves together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goodes, and parted them to all men, as euery man had neede. And they continued dailey with one accorde in the Temple, and brake breade from house to house, and did eate their meate together with gladnesse, and singlenesse of heart, praying God, and had fauour with all the people. And the Lorde added to the congregation dailey, such as shoulde be sau'd.



S God Woulde haue all the meane of our saluation comprehended in his onely sonne Iesus Christ: so is it manifest that the same appetayneth onely to them which be members of his Church. For the Church is commonly called his bodye, bicause it is by fayth vnited and knit to one heade which is Christ, which poureth into all his members the spirite of health and life. And as it cannot be that a member deuided from the bodye, can feele any part of liuely spirite that cometh from the heade: so is it impossible, that they can be quickened with the spirite of Christ, which are deuided from the Church, which is his body. And bicause all sectes that euer were

were or yet be, challenge to them the title and name of the Church of God: it is necessary to haue some exact knowledge of the true Church, least either deceyue vs, or we our selues, by a false and counterfeyt name of the Church. Which thing caused Luke, moued by the holy ghost, so diligently to describe the order and maner of the primitive Church. For this is the ende and scope of this description, that we shoulde hereby frame a true and perfite patterne of a Church, according to the which, we might both iudge of others, and also rule our selues. Yesterday he beganne certaine principall and most generall pointes, of things appertaining to the same, declaring howe the first belauers were gathered together, by Peters preaching, and were taken by baptisme into the fellowship of Christ and his Church. Furthermore, he rehearseth their studies and exercises, suche as were of continuance in the Apostles doctrine, mutuall beneuolence, & helping one another, the godly and sincere vse of the mysticall supper, and continuall prayers. But because in these pointes some things remayned, requiring a further declaration, he now adiopneth and supplieth the same. And first he speaketh of the mutuall communion and distribution of their goodes. Then intreateth he of their publike assemblies and meetings. Thirdly, he describeth the whole order of their life and conuersation. And at length sheweth how greatly they profited by these their exercises.

To the mutuall and common distribution of goodes, it appertayneth, where he sayth: All that beleued kept themselves together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goodes, and parted them to all men, as euery man had neede. First he attributeth to them vnitie and coniunction of mindes, which is the berye spring and fountaine of a readye good will to helpe. For although the Graeke phrase *ἑσται ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ* (that is, they were together) may be referred to the place, yet it shall be more commodiously expounded of the ioyning together of their mindes, forasmuch as the things that followe abundantly shewe, that they dwelt not together in one house, but in diuers. The knitting together of mindes brought forth this communion of goodes, and all kinde of benefites, which extended so farre, that many sold their possessions, and made their goodes common to all men, least the poorer sort through impacience or anye other occasion that might be giuen, shoulde fall from the truth.

It is diligently to be enquired what the maner and order of this communion was. For where the Anabaptistes and diuers such newfangled & factious fellows vnderstand it not, they would bring in Plato his communion of all thinges, and saye, it is vnlawfull that anye Christian man should possesse any thing of his owne: whome we might shortly aunswere, that of a singular example, no generall rule ought to be made. But for the simples sake it must be proued by argumentes, that they are so vlye deceyued. First, the expresse commaundementes of God repugne against their opinion. For he hath giuen lawes, touching the ordering of families and householdes, he hath prescribed rich men diuers dueties: which were needelesse, if it were not lawfull for a Christian, to possesse somewhat of his owne. Paule surely commaundeth riche men, not to forsake or cast awaye their riches, but to vse them godlily, and in holy works. He sayth that they which prouide not for their familie and house, are worse than Infidels. But what neede we of such care and prouidence to fede our owne folke, if we

Communica-
ring of goodes

1. Tim. 6.

1. Tim. 5.

Math. 27.

Luc. 5.

Rom. 16.

1. Iohn. 3.

we ought to possesse nothing of our owne, but may vse other mens goodes as common to vs with them: Likewise theft is forbidden by God, with all kinde of decepte, fraude, and guile. But how can there be any theft where all things are common: But where our aduersaries contende by examples, let vs by examples confute them. And we will easily proue this was not the Apostles minde nor meaning, that all things shoulde be common without any propertie belonging to any man. Ioseph of Arimathea, which honoured the sonne of God with his buriall, was rich, and also a Disciple of Christ. We may say the same of Nicodemus, Lazarus and his sisters, and Simon the leprouse: who both kept their houses and goodes, and bled them to the reliefe of such as belonged to them, and of Christ, and his disciples. To these maye we ioine the women, which also, as it is sayde in Scripture, ministred to Christ (not of other mens, and common goodes) but of their owne. It is further manifest that our Lorde neuer bled anye mans goodes against the will of the owner. For he took the Ass whereon he rode into the Citie, by request and intreatie: and the house where he kept his last passeouer, hee obtayned by the leaue of the Goodman of the house. What iniustice then shall it be, for men to chalenge more right and interest in other mens goodes, than Christes example will suffer, to whom all power is giuen in heauen and in earth: And euen in this selfe booke shall be rehearsed the examples of diuers, whose fayth is singularly commended, which neyther solde their houses, nor made their goodes common. Of which number are Thabita, Lydia, Mary the mother of Marke, Symon the Tanner, Cornelius the Captaine, Philip, and diuers other. What shall we saye of Caius the hoste of all the congregation: What of Philemon, which had a seruant bought with his owne money: which thing Paule so little reproveth, that he sendeth him backe againe his seruant which ranne away from him. But what neede we examples fette from other places, whereas this present place evidently proueth a propertie and possessing of goodes: For first the Christians solde their possessions, and if it be a fault for one to haue anye thing of his owne, then caused they other men to offende, to whome they solde their goodes. Yea, they must be conuincd to haue bled couine and decept, taking money for those things which by Gods lawe no man might keepe or holde as his owne. But doubtlesse they whose fayth, godlynesse, and religion, the holy ghost so greatly commendeth, were cleare and free from both these. Further Luke maketh mention here, of distribution, whereby was giuen to euery man as he had neede. It was not lawfull for euery man, to take at his pleasure. Besides that, no man was compelled to sell that he had, or to giue it, but all this distribution depended vpon eche mans good will, as we shall learne hereafter in the example of Ananias and Sapphira. Wherefore by this worde (common) is vnderstanded nothing, but a voluntarie contribution, whereby euery man gaue, as seemed him good, after his habilitie, to the reliefe and maintenance of the poore, least through inpatience and pouertie they should take any naughty wayes, or turne to their Iewish religion and superstition againe. The diligent consideration of the Communion which we haue in Christ, and the feruent desire of the loue of God, wherewith euery man is inflamed when he seeth his brother in neede, enforced them thus to doe, which, as Iohn sayth, cannot shut vp the bowels of pitie.ouer and besides this, the

first

first belauers were to be enbzed by this voluntarie contribution, to take the more patiently the losse of their goodes, which shortly after should ensue, when persecution arose: seeing they had learned before to bestow them on others, and were contented themselves to liue with a little.

Therefore this place ministreth no example of confusion, wherby these phzenetike disturbers of common weales may be mainteyned: but only a certayne liberalitie towarde the poore is in this place commended, which God would haue alwayes to flourish in his Church. We know what God sayth, Deuter. 15. Let there be no begger at all amongst you. Yet God was not ignorant there would be alwayes that shoulde be pinched with penurie. But that the same shoulde runne bagarant about, as publike spectacles of pouertie and beggerie, is most contrary to the nature of charitie, wherunto all Gods people are bounde. And there are diuers other lawes of God extant, wherby an order is declared howe the poore may be commodiously prouided for, that they neede not go begging from doore to doore. Hereof it commeth to passe, that the Prophetes in euery place commend the poore vnto vs. And Christ doth bouchsafe so to commend the care and helpe that ought to be taken for them, that he testifieth, he will in the later daye reward them that haue done good to the poore for his sake, euen as though they had done it to himselfe: which order and institution was of such force and authoritie with the Apostles, that they were not ashamed to make prouision for the poore. Yea, when Paule and Barnabas had declared the trade of their ministerie, to Iohn, Peter, and Iames: they thought good to admonish them of this one thing, that they shoulde not neglect the poore whome they knewe Christ had so diligently commended vnto them. Besides that, Paule exhorteth the Corinthians, that they shoulde not onely see for the prouision of their owne poore, but also (where they were very rich) they shoulde helpe the needy brethren at Jerusalem, which were verie poore. And surely, it is euident that our predecessours had a great care herof, if we consider the donations, and foundations, both of Princes and priuate men, which with greater liberalitie had giuen their goodes to the Church, to the ende that both puritie of doctrine myght be preserved, and the poore and needy relieved and helped. But in these dayes religion is growne into such contempt, that they are very fewe and scant which will giue ought of their owne, but euery where there are ynough which wil rape and reue, and prodigally waste that which others haue giuen. They shall one daye proue that Christ is a reuenger which will not contemne the crye of his poore, and will most seuerely reuenge the spoyle and waste of his Church. And it is to be feared least they shall leaue them to the wicked, enemies of the Church, and sayth, to be rifled, bicause they disdain to bestowe them on their euen Christians, the brethren of Christ.

But let vs returne to Luke, which describeth the publyke and holy assembly of the Church, where he sayth they continued euery day in the temple with one accorde. Then they came oftentimes together in the temple, not for that they would be at the Jewes sacrifices, which they knewe were abolished through the bloude of Christ: but bicause of the concourse of the people, that they might teach and winne the more vnto Christ. By this example, we are taught to seeke occasion on euery side, to set forth the kingdome of Christ: and for this cause the people ought oftentimes to meete

Deut. 15.

Deut. 14.
15. 16. 24. &c

Mat. 25. 26.

Galat. 2.

1. Cor. 16.
2. Cor. 8. 9.The congregation
and meetings of
the faithfull.

Iohn. 3.

Luc. 22.

Iohn. 13.

together, that there may be the greater number to heare the worde of God. For where the faithfull are gouerned by the light of the truth, they can not be ashamed thereof, and seeke not darckenesse and corners, as they doe, whose workes be euill. Verily we reade that Christ taught alwayes openly, and thereby excused himselfe both when he was taken, and afterwarde also before Caiphas. And Paule the Apostle in his first Epistle to the Corinthians the. xj. and. xiiij. Chap. diligently describeth the publike assemblies and holy meetings: which he woulde neuer haue done, if he had not vnderstode they had bene of much force to the setting forth of Gods true religion.

Iohn. 17.

Two thinges are ascribed to the primitive Church: continuance together, and vnanimitie of mindes, which are needefull at all times, but specially in assemblies and Church meetings. For where God (as it hath otherwhere bene sayde) hath commended them by a singuler promise: such an earnest studie and perseuerance in keeping the same, is mete for Christians. Againe, where these assemblies are made, both for doctrine sake, for publike prayers, and vse of the sacramentes, vnanimitie for this purpose is chiefly requisite. With this it becommeth Ministers of the word to be ioyned together, least they be authors of partaking, and sectes, suche as we knowe were once in the Church of Corinth: but let them with one accord bryng & set forth the doctrine of truth, & labor to bryng Disciples vnto Christ, as he commaunded in the. xxviij. chap. of Mathew. That vnanimitie in prayers, is of great weight before god, appereth hereby, because mutuall loue is euery where commaunded, and Christ earnestly desireth of his father, that all the beleeuing may be one, as he and his father are one. The same reason may be made also of the sacramentes. For where they seale vnto vs the benefites of Christ, and are tokens and pledges of the fellowship and vnitie which we haue in Christ, by the vsing wherof we are taken into one body with Christ: it cannot be that they can vse them duly which are at enmitie amongst themselves. These things ought well to haue bene considered in these dayes, where there is great faulte committed on all sides. For they that glorie in the doctrine of the Gospell, and haue enioyed the same a long whyle, waere slacke for the most part, and are quite boyde of perseuerance, as though they had attayned already to perfection, and had now no more to doe. They are deuided into diuers and sundry sectes, and one of them excommunicateth another. So that it must needes come to passe that Paule sayth: If you bite and deuoure one another, take heede least you be likewise consumed one of another. And it is no marueyle that the Gospell doth no better succede and go forwarde, considering those men are neither feruent in perseuerance, nor ioyned together in vnanimitie, in whome the same of all other is chiefly required. Let who so will reade Eusebius preface, vpon the eyght booke of the Ecclesiasticall hystorie: and he shall finde a most liuely description of these times, and what we may looke for.

Galat. 5.

Howe the
Christians
liued pri-
uately.

Vnto these, Luke ioyneth the trade of lyfe that these first Christians liued in, priuately among themselves: And they brake breade (sayth he) from house to house, and did eate their meate together with singlenesse of heart, praying God. And although this that he speaketh of breaking of breade, may after a sort be vnderstanded of the mysticall supper, as is declared in the Homely before going: yet for that he maketh mention also of com-

mon meate, it seemeth this place commodiously may be wholly expounded of their priuate trade of lyfe, in bidding one another to their houses to meales and repastes. Luke teacheth vs that the richer sort did not only depart with some portion of their goodes to the reliefe in generall, but also that they did exercise liberalitie towardes the poore, and others, of that which they had reserued peculiarly for themselves. And he therefore expressely mencioneth houses, that it might appeare diuers of the number of the faithfull kept their houses and goodes still, wherby that confused and sedicious communion of things, which the Anabaptistes doe imagine, is most strongly confuted. But here such an order and trade of lyfe and conuersation is expressed, as is full of benefites, loue, and mutuall helping one another. And bicause men offende much in immoderate and excessiue ryote and pride of feasting: Luke thought good chiefly to entreate hereof, saying they obserued thre thinges therein. First, they feasted together in gladnesse, according to that saying of Paule: He that sheweth mercy, let him doe it with cherefulness: for God loueth a cherefull giuer. Therfore in their feasting, there was no disdainefulnesse, which causeth vs to yke at our benefites, but they receyued euery man with glad and chearefull minde, and chiefly those whome they knewe wanted liuing. For so Christ commaundeth vs to bid the poore, which are not able to recompence and requite vs with benefites againe. Unto cherefulness he addeth singleness of heart, by the which he vnderstandeth sinceritie of minde, voyde of all deceipt and guyle, which is contrary to that vice, which will seeme to benefite others, and yet seeketh their own commoditie and gayne, little minding the vtilitie and profite of others. Thirde he rehearseth thankesgiuing, wherby they did set forth the bountie of God, who as he made all thinges: so is he the preseruer and nourisher of them all. And if a man ioyne these thre together, it shall easily appeare, that they had a singuler care of temperance: for where this is not, there is no true cherefulness, and christian simplicitie, much lesse, giuing of thankes. Therefore christian men must drawe them a rule out of these things, howe to behaue themselves in their banquets. Let them knowe that the chiefe thing therein must be charitie and the benefiting of others. Let them studie to be harborous, and knowe that they are not appointed Lordes, but stewardes of the goodes that they haue. Let them be mery and chearefull in giuing, bicause as Christ sayth: It is better to giue, than to receyue. Herevnto let there be ioynd such a singleness of minde, and sinceritie, as becommeth Christians. Chiefely let them be mindfull of God: let them acknowledge him to be the author of all things belonging to our life: let them aske their necessities of him, and thanke him for his gifts receyued. For through sayth and giuing of thankes (as Paule sayth) meates are sanctified. We haue in Christ an example hereof, whome we neuer read to haue broken breade, without blessing or giuing of thankes, as maye be seene Math. 14. 15. Luc. 24. Iohn. 6. &c. These things teach vs what we maye thinke of their banquetting, which eyther vtterly despise the poore, or else giue them with an euill will, and forgetting to giue God thankes, reioyce in scurrilitie, and kinde intemperancie by lowde singing and vnseasonable musick. Against these are the sermons of the Prophetes. Isa. 5. and Amos. 6.

Further, least any man might thinke this feruent studie in godlynesse

Rom. 12.
2. Cor. 9.

Luc. 14.

Psal 147.
Math. 6.

Actes. 20.

1. Tim. 4.

The fruite

of true god-
lynesse.

1. Sam. 2.

Iohn 6.

Iere. 31.

Isa. 54.

Iohn 14.

Math. 23.

1. Cor. 1.3.

lacked his successe: Luke teacheth vs what commoditie ensued thereof, where he sayeth: They had fauour with all the people. And the Lorde added dayly. &c. He sheweth a double fruite hereof comming. First, they were in fauour and authoritie with all men of the wiser sort: For it is playne by that that was sayde before, that the wicked were afrayd of them. Wee are hereby taught, what thing getteth men true authoritie: verily the studie and desire of Gods religion and glory. For it must needes be true that the Lorde sayde by the Prophete: I will honour them that honour me, and they shall be put to shame that despise me. Let the Rulers of the church and other Magistrates marke well this thing. The superintendents know that they haue neede both of authoritie and fauour, but they go not alwayes about to get it that wayes that they ought to doe, whiles some of them hunt for worldly prayse, some studie to heape by riches, other seeke to be aloft in worldly pompe, being little carefull in the meane while for the honoz and glory of God. Where the feruent zeale and desire of Gods glorye is the most compendious way to come vnto glory. For God, which can turne the hartes of men which way it pleaseth him, and preserueth the remembrance of them that be his, as the Psalmist sayeth, will surely rewarde them for euer. An other fruite or commoditie therof is, that the Lord added dayly vnto his church such as should be saued. The church or congregation therefore encreased, and they that first entred into it, felt their fayth in them also encreased. No man therefore can laboz in vaine in the vineyard of the Lord, so that he earnestly applye his vocation. Marke in the meane time howe all encrease of the Church is attributed to the Lorde. The Lorde (sayth he) added euery day vnto the Congregation such as should be saued. In dede the Apostles preached, and drew men by preaching of the worde. But all the successe of their labour must be ascribed to God onely, who onely hath power vpon the hartes of men. For Christ hath taught vs that no man cometh to him, except the father vouchsafe to drawe him. This thing Paule expresth by an elegant parable of husbandrye, in the first to the Corinthians the thirde Chapter. And the Lorde testifieth by his Prophete, that he will write his lawes in the hartes of the faythfull, so that they shall neede none other instruction. Wherevpon in another place the belæuing are called most properly θεοδιδασκαλῶν, that is to saye, taught of God, or the Disciples and schollers of God. And Christ himselfe sayth that his spirite shall be our counsellor and maister to leade vs into all truth. Here is the impudencie of them reproued which gather themselues disciples, and call them after their owne name. And they also are as faultie, which acknowledge other maisters beside Christ, and reioyce in their names more than in the name of Christ, whome Christ and Paule most earnestly impugne and rebuke. Let no man take occasion hereby to be slouthfull. For enerye man must haue a respect to his calling, and walke in the same, and ascribe all successe, not to his owne industrie, but to the grace of God, which worketh in vs according to his good pleasure, those things that make for his glory, and for our and other mennes saluation.

Let these suffice, for declaration of the order of the primitive Church. Let vs knowe it is our partes to be occupied in the same exercises, which they sometime were giuen vnto. Let the ende of them all be, the glorye of God, and the saluation of manye, whome we must labour to bring vnto

Christ.

Christ. For so shall it come to passe, that we shall haue fauour and authoritie amongst men, and shall receyue plenteous fruite of our traueyle in Iesus Christ: to whome be blessing, honour, power, and glozy for euer.
Amen.

The thirde chapiter vpon *the Actes of the Apostles.*

The.xx.Homelie.

PETER and Iohn went vp together into the Temple at the ninth houre. And a certaine man that was halt from his mothers wombe was brought, whome they layde dayly at the gate of the Temple (which is called bewtifull) to aske almes of them that entred into the Temple. When hee sawe Peter and Iohn that they would go into the Temple, he desired to receyue an almes. And Peter fastened his eyes on him with Iohn and sayd: Looke on vs. And he gaue heede vnto them, trusting to receyue something of them. Then sayde Peter: siluer and golde haue I none: such as I haue, giue I thee. In the name of Iesus Christ of Nazareth, aryse vp and walke. And he tooke him by the right hande and lift him vp. And immediatly his feete and ancle bones receyued strength. And hee sprang, stode, and walked, and entred with them into the Temple, walking and leaping, and prayeing God.



We haue perceyued in the Sermon before going, what the trade, successe, and encrease of the primum Church was. This thing of all other was notable, that the faythfull grewe in fauoure and authoritie with manye men, and caused the wicked to be afrayd of them. Among other things, mention was made of manye and diuers myracles, which Luke sayth, the Apostles did. Wherefore out of a number, he taketh one, which gaue occasion of a newe sermon, by the which Peter bringeth certayne thousands to the knowledge of Christ, as we shall see when we come to the place. Nowe, because this is so singular a myracle: it is meete we diligently discusse all the circumstances therof, with as much regard as Luke hath penned them; who beginneth first with the occasion of the myracle, then he describeth the lame mannes person, on whome the myracle was wrought:

The occasion
of the miracle

Exod. 29.
Num. 28.

Prou. 16.

Iacob. 4.

wrought: and last of all sheweth what successe folowed of the myracle, and what the lame man did, after he was healed.

The occasion of the myracle was, that Peter and Iohn, about the ninth houre went bp into the temple, at what tyme this lame man was brought thither to aske almes of the people. The ninth houre of the day with them, was thre a clocke at the after noone with vs, as maye be gathered of that we sayde in the seconde Chapter, touching the counting of houres. He calleth it the houre of prayer, bicause the people of God had certayne appointed houres, when they made their publike prayers: as maye be seene as well otherwheres, as also in Daniel the sixt Chapter. And God had appointed in the law the morning and euening sacrifice, which no man being in his wit, will saye was done without prayers. Touching the time of mid-day or noone, which also was appointed for prayers: we shall speake hereafter in the tenth Chapter: where Peter at the same houre, being in Simon the Tanners house, went into the vpper storie thereof to praye. And it is not without a cause that the Scriptures make such diligent mention of the houres of prayers. For first we are taught hereby, that we ought to beginne, finishe, and ende all our doings, with calling on the name of God, bicause without his helpe and grace, it is impossible for vs to accomplishe any thing well. For as Salomon sayth: A man deuyseth a waye in his heart, but it is the Lord that ordreth his goings. Wherebpon the Apostle S. Iames sharply reproveth them, which without respect vnto the will of God, so deliberate and appoint their matters, as though the successe of them depended of their owne power. Also we are admonished, that discipline is needefull in the Church, according to the which (as Paule sayth) all things appertayning to religion, and the honour of God, ought to be done decently and in order. We confesse in dede, that it is the dutie of Christians, in euery place to lift bp pure and cleane handes vnto God, when and where we haue neede of his helpe, and that he may heare vs. Yet bicause Christ hath commended vnto vs publike prayers, by a peculiar promise: it becometh vs to haue a speciall care and consideration therof, and not without a cause to refraine from the holye congregation, which it is euident was instituted long agoe, for doctrine, and prayers sake. And though many things afterwarde grewe into superstition, yet ought that to be no impediment vnto vs. For the superstition ought to be taken awaye, and the primitiue and lawfull vse to be restored. Now there is nothing left but the iangling of belles, whereby we are called in the morning, at noone, and at euening, to prayers. The superstitious blage whereof many accuse: but very fewe traueyle to haue the solemne houres of prayers, as they were at the first vsed, to be restored.

The Apostles are specially to be marked, who sayth Luke, went into the Church, at the houre of prayer. Which was not for the sacrifice sake, that then was offred, as was heretofore declared. But bicause they were desirous to praye, and also hoped to finde some occasion whereby to teache the people. And they would not bicause of the puerile superstition of the Jewes, which easily might be corrected, leaue their dutie vndone, and let slippe such an occasion and opportunitie to doe good. Whose example teacheth vs that we must seeke all maner of occasion to set forth the doctrine of the Gospel and knowledge of Christ. The dutie that we owe vnto Christ

bindeth

bindeth vs hereunto. For as he intermitted nothing belonging to our saluation, so must not we fayle of our duties, in enlarging the boundes and borders of his kingdome. This caused Paule to thinke the weight and care of all congregations laye on his shoulders. And in another place he reioyeth in the attemptes of his aduersaries, and yllwillers, because he perceyued they serued after a sort, to the setting forth of the Gospell. Let vs be ashamed therefore of our negligence and slouth, who like sluggardes (to say no worse) doe daily let passe the occasions that the Lord offreth vs. And here chiefly hath that saying of the Prophete, place: Cursed is he that doth the worke of the Lord negligently.

Secondly, Luke diligently describeth the lame mans person, on whome the myracle was afterwarde wrought. In which description, the excellencie of the myracle, and the power of Christ the authoz thereof, doe evidently appeare. First he sayth, the man was lame from his mothers wombe, and so lame, that hauing lost the vse of all his limmes, he was fayne to be borne. Unto the which ioynie his age, taken out of the words that follow, (for he was fourtie yeare olde) and thou shalt perceyue his disease coulde not be cured by any arte of man. For such are the diseases for the most part that cleaue vnto vs from our natiuitie, or else by long time and continuance of yeaeres, growne as it were into a nature, or custome: yet was the ende of all molte blessed. For those thinges that did aggrauate and increase the poore mannes calamitie, serued to the setting forth of Gods glorie: for it might haue seemed but a small glozie to Christ, for Peter to heale a disease curable by mannes arte and cunning. But wheras he whose helth no man euer hoped for, was healed by the name of Christ: it is euident that Christ is almightie & endued with diuine power, and therefore is verye God. And to this ende commonly serue the greatest calamities which God bleseth to take from vs, that by those thinges which no counsel or help of man can remedie, he setteth forth the glozy of his name. Example whereof we haue both here in this place, and also in him that was blinde from his natiuitie. For the Disciples demaunding whether it was his fault or his parentes that he was borne blinde: Christ aunswereth: Neyther hath this man sinned, nor yet his father and mother: but that the woorkes of God shoulde be shewed in him. This serueth both for our instruction and consolation. For it teacheth vs that we must not rashly iudge of other mennes mishappes and miseries, as though they that were fallen therein had deserved them through their vngaciousnesse. For many times it cometh to passe, that God suffereth vs to be afflicted for none other cause, but for that by vs he will set forth his name and glozye. Wherefore we must not be to hastie in iudgement, least we runne against the same rocke, that we reade Iobes friends once did: which of his calamitie gathered, that through his wickednesse and sinfull life he had deserved the wrath of God. Also let them take comfort hereof, whose calamities are so great, that there is no more hope or helpe for them in man: let them not therefore thinke they are forsaken of God. But let them yelde themselves patiently to God, to doe his pleasure on them: and they shall shortly proue that those thinges which they thought were tokens of his wrath, pertayned to the glozye of his name, and to their saluation, wherewith Paule had a respect when he said: We knowe that for them that loue God, all things worke to the best.

2. Cor. 11.

Phil. 1.

Iere. 48.

The description of the lame man.

Shalt e2 lame from his mothers wombe

Iohn. 9.

Rom. 8.

Besides

A begger.

Deut. 15.

Math. 25.

Besides this remediless disease, Luke testifieth he was poore. And it is a token of extreme neede, that he was laid euery day at the temple gate, which by reason of the gorgeous building was called beautifull, to aske almes of them that went by, to finde him. But that this was against the lawe of God, appeareth by that was sayde in the last sermons. For Gods lawe is manifest, forbidding any begger to be in Israel. And many thinges are commaunded of God for the relieuing of the poore, which he woulde haue so ordered, that our brethren shoulde not go abrode lyke publike stages and wondermentes of miserie, and beggerie, wherof they were little mindefull, as appeareth by example of this miserable creature, who was as it maye seme by his bringing euery day to the Temple gate, one of Ierusalem, and dwelling in a most welthye Citie. And yet he is compelled amongst his brethren, and among an infinite number of Priests, to begge for his liuing. Such other haue we described. Iohn. 9. and Marc. 10. This declareth the great corruption and degeneration of the Jewish nation. For hereby it appeareth, that the goodes which God had appointed to fede the poore with, were alienated from them, and through abuse transposed other wayes. So true it is, that there is nothing in right order among the, which in Gods religion dare rashly dispence with any thing contrary to his word. And not long after, extreme destruction folowed such extreme corruption. Wherby we may iudge what we ought to looke for in these dayes, who are in lyke fault as the Jewes were. For we contraye to the example of the primitive Church, suffer those to begge, whome we ought to take and loue as our brethren. The true vse of the Church goodes is marred and deprauiued by the Papistes, and those thinges serue to the maintenaunce of ydle men, wherewith the poore of the Church ought to be found and nourished. And although they that bragge of the Gospell, haue put away superstition and ydolatrie: yet all their reformatiōs of the Church stop here, when they shoulde dispose the Church goodes truly, and relieue the poore Christians, wherby it is manifest that a great many vnder the cloke of the Gospell, seeke but their owne gaine onely. But Christ which shall come in the later daye to reuenge the quarell of the poore, will not faile of his dutie.

Last of all, this is to be considered in the lame man, that Luke sayth, he asked almes of the Apostles. But where he was daily layde at the gate of the Temple, it is not vnlike that he was ignorant what miracles they did euery daye. Why then did he not rather aske the health of his body? Shall we iudge of him according to the propertie of the beggers in our dayes, which cast themselves into diseases, and refuse to be healed, wherby to get the more by begging? God forbid. For so great a benefite coulde not haue light vpon so prophane a contemner of God and his grace. We thinke rather it was for cause he was now vtterlye in dispayre to be cured of his disease. There were in deede diuers examples of many which Christ had restored to their former health; but he knewe of none bozne lame from his mothers wombe that he had healed. Wherefore since he was out of all hope of hauing his health againe, he thought it in vaine to desire it of any body, and hauing none other care but for his liuing, he asked of the Apostles that, which thereto belonged. But he receyued more than epyther he durst hope for, or aske. For he is deliuered from his sickenesse, and made a singuler instrument and vessell of Gods goodnesse, and glory: which he

did

did vs to the saluation of manye. This is a singuler goodnesse of God towarde vs, which oftentimes bleth to preuent, and to doe beyonde all our hope and prayers; in so much that he giueth vs both more and greater things than we once coulde haue hoped for. So he promiseth vnto Abraham being onely carefull for Ismael his life, a sonne also by Sara called Isaac. So brought he the people of Israel out of Egypt, with all their owne substance, and part of the Egyptians also, who scarce euer hoped to be deliuered. Dauid promiseth the like goodnesse, and notably setteth it forth, where he is promised that the Messias shoulde be borne of his stocke, which thing he neuer once durst haue looked for. I let passe manye such other examples, because we trye and finde the like euery day, whereas we being carefull for things belonging only to the body, he promiseth vs of his owne accord, such blisse of his heauenlye kingdome in his sonne, as passeth all mans vnderstanding and capacitie. Let vs therfore learne to put our trust in his grace and goodnesse, and let vs not despaire of his good will, which is more libe- rall and bountifull, than we can eyther wishe or desire.

Nowe let vs come to the thirde part of the hystorie, which containeth in it a diligent description of the myracle that Peter shewed: the circumstan- ces whereof we must as diligently consider. Peter beginneth with causing the lame man to take heede and be attent, saying: Looke on vs. He woulde by this saying, procure him to take diligent heede that he shoulde well ac- knowledg the authoz of that benefite, that within a while after, he should receyue: least he might suppose it was done either by chaunce, by mannes arte, or by magicke. For is euident that they onely fruitfully receyue the benefites of God, which consider God is the authoz of them, and ascribe all glozy and thanks to him therfore. But they which neglect Christ, and looke onely vpon the Ministers, myracles are many times to such men a cause of superstition, as we may see in the men of our dayes, which defend worshipping of Saintes, chiefly by reason of the myracles that they wrought. This is a token of great modestie in Peter, that he speaketh not of himselfe alone, but sayeth, Looke on vs. He acknowledgeth therfore Iohn to be his partener and fellowe, farre from the pride of the Popes, which while they will be taken for Peters successors, doe imperiously Lord it ouer other Bishops, and challenge to themselves, all power vpon the Church of Christ.

Then being not ignozant that the man looked to receyue some money of them, he putteth him out of that conceyte, and causeth him to hope for a better thing, saying: Siluer and golde haue I none: such as I haue, giue I thee. For the Apostles be the Stewardes of spirituall goodes, and of the myste- ries of God, as Paule sayeth, and not of money, wherewith the vngodlye moste times abounde, more than the godly. Peter professeth two thinges verie profitable to be marked. The first is pouertie, and that he hath neyther siluer nor golde. For he was one of that companie that had left all they had and followed Christ. Therefore he coulde not haue the ri- ches of the worlde. Shall we therfore thinke him vnhappie and in mise- rie? God defende. Let no man therfore measure felicitie by the goodes and riches of this worlde. For he cannot be miserable that possesseth Christ, although he were bereaued of all his goodes, and with Peter had neither siluer nor golde. And if Peter lacked these goodes, howe come Peters suc-

Gene. 17.

Exod. 12.

2. Sam. 7.

Esay. 64.

The report
of the myracleThe pouertie
of Peter.

1. Cor. 4.

Marc. 10.

Daniel. ii.

Looke the
Pontifical of
the fathers,
touching the
Popes cor-
ruption.

cessors by so great abundance: what manner of patrimonie, I praye you of Peters is it, and from whence cometh it, that now a dayes hath not onely the greatest reuenues of golde and siluer, but also whole countries and kingdomes: Surely we haue nothing in the scriptures written hereof, neyther doe credible hystories make any mention hereof. Onely of Iudas there is mention, which sought golde and siluer by vnlawfull meanes, which was the cause of his desperation and destruction. And of Antichrist there is a prophetic that he shoulde possesse the treasures of the earth. Let the Popes therefore stint to bragge of Peters patrimonie, whereas Peter so plainly reproveth them of lying. But how shoulde they stinte which are beco me so impudent, that they feare not to make a laughing game of Peters wordes, when their new Pope lift vp on high, in a stole (of easement) whurleth amongst the people, a kinde of counterfeit money, which is neither golde nor siluer, saying: Siluer and golde haue I none. &c. But within a while after, being remooued to another place, he casteth to his owne creatures golde and siluer, they crying: He hath scatted abroad, he hath giuen to the poore, his righteousnesse remayneth for euer and euer. I praye you what is playing and iesting with the worde of God, if this be not: Verily Thomas Aquinas did feately quippe these godlesse menne, and forsakers of the truth. For where in the Counsell at Lyons, certaine reuenues and annuities were brought from Naples to Gregorie the tenth, hee was not ashamed to saye to Thomas: we cannot now saye, as Peter once sayd: Siluer and golde haue we none. But Thomas answered him: Neyther can you say, Arise and walke. For the learned man sawe that through couetousnesse of the Popes, both the Church was brought out of square, and the giftes of the holy spirit, wherein the Church did sometimes flourish, were vtterly extinguished. Many men perceyue the same now a dayes also, but such is the vntowardnesse of this time, that men will wittingly be deceyued. Let vs whose eyes the light of the Gospell hath opened, shie their snares and impudent tyrannie, and not suffer our selues anye longer to be deluded and robbed by them.

Secondly, Peter professeth a promptnesse and readinesse of good will to benefite, and to doe good, where he sayth: Such as I haue, giue I thee, which is as much as if he shoulde saye, if I had money I woulde giue it thee also. Nowbeit I will giue thee that I haue. These wordes shewe an example of a well willing minde, which we also ought to haue in the exercise of beneuolence. For there be that professe an earnest good will, but they saye they wote not what, nor howe much they shoulde giue the poore. But the lawe of loue and good will, answereth all these questions, commaunding vs to loue our neighbour as our selfe. Whosoever thus doe, enquire not howe much they shoulde giue, but seeke what their neighbour hath neede of, and if they finde that they haue it, depart with it to their neyghbour liberally. Wherefore if they haue money, they helpe the needy with money: If they haue plentie of victualles, they deale it amongst the hungrye: if they haue rayment, they cloath them that they see go naked. And if they haue none of all these, at leastwise, they giue their heart to their poore brethren, the good will wherof they declare with friendly wordes, with counsell, and comfort, wherewith they reare and cheare vp the poore bodye that is afflicted. So, following the example of Peter, they giue whatsoeuer they haue.

Where

Whereupon we gather, that they be boyde of charitie, and ledde with no affection of doing good, which aske what and howe much they should giue vnto the poore.

Nowe, what that was that Peter had, and gaue so liberally vnto the poore, he addeth: In the name of Iesus Christ of Nazareth, Arise and walke. And he tooke him by the right hande, and lift him vp. Then he giueth him perfite health of body: which power he had receyued together with the other Apostles of Christ. And he so giueth the same, that it may appeare to all men, that he doth it not by his owne power, but that Christ is the author thereof, by whose commaundement, power, and operation, all the myracle was wrought. Of the which thing afterwarde, he discourseth further before the people. Also many things concurre and fall out that make for the veritie and setting forth of the myracle. For Peter taketh the lame man by the hande, and lifteth him vp. And by and by his anclebones and feete receyue strength, so that he hath not much adoe to rise, as they whose limmes are weakened with long sicknesse, but starteth vp and leapeth. And it was no sodeyne mouing or pang onely for a season, such as theirs is who are phrenetike, or haunted with some spirite: but he standeth steadily on his feete, and walketh vp and downe. Besides, he goeth into the Church with the Apostles, springing and leaping, and declaring the benefite of God. Therefore this lame man was so healed, that there remayned no signe of his former infirmitie and disease. For Gods workes be perfite, and there is in them no poynt of craft, fraude or deceit. But before we conclude our sermon, we must speake of two things, seruing to the institution of our fayth.

The first is a figure of our spirituall restitution, which the holy ghost thought good to set forth by this myracle. For touching the soule, we be all in like case as is this lame man. He tooke his sicknesse euen from his natiuety, which bereft him of the vse of al his limmes. So we be borne sinners from our mothers wombe: and such is the force of the sinne that naturally from Adam, our father, hath ouerflowed all his posteritie, that it hath left in vs no power wherby to fulfill the lawe of God, and to doe such things as belong to our saluation. For, the lawe of God is spirituall, but we be carnall, folde vnder sinne. Then, as the mercifull Lorde by his goodnesse preuented this lame man, being without all hope of helth: so God first sought for, and called our first father, which being feared with his sinne, fledde from the sight of God, and comforted him with the free promise of saluation. And as the lame man is healed by the name of Iesus Christ, which Peter preached vnto him, and taking him by the hande, lifteth him vp: so through the merite of Christ haue we gotten saluation, and the preaching of the Gospell offreth vs the same: which when we haue receyued through fayth, straightwayes we feele Christes spirite effectually working in vs, which giueth vs the hande, lifteth vs vp, and maketh vs strong, to overcome the tyranny of sinne, and to be able to walk in the wayes of the Lord. For it is his work, to regenerate, to enflame with loue of heavenly things, to stirre vp affiance of saluation, to certifie and make men sure of their adoption, and to teach them to crye, Abba father: Besides, he lightneth our mindes with the knowledge of God and his will, he leadeth them into all truth, and comforteth them in all aduersitie. Therefore by his operation

A figure of
the restitu-
on of mans
kinde.

Rom.7.

Gene.3.

Iohn.3.

Rom.8.

Iohn.14-16

Phil. 4.

An example
of them that
be restored.

Rom. 6.

it cometh to passe, that we which befoze were weake and lame, are now able to do all things in Christ which comforteth vs. And although the propertie of the fleshe remaineth, which maketh vs sometime to slippe, and inuegleth vs with diuers temptations: yet alwayes Christes spirite ouercometh, and suffreth vs not to be tempted aboue our strength. For it is a perfite health which is gotten vs in Christ, which can be disturbed with no endemour of the worlde, or Prince thereof.

Secondly, the restored to health, are taught their duties by example of this lame man. He as soone as he hearde that health was promised him in the name of Christ, and was lift vp, by Peters hande, he springeth by and by. So, after that by preaching of the Gospell we haue health offered vs in Christ, and perceyue our selues to be quickened and stirred with the suggestion of the holy spirite: let vs rise by and by out of the puddle of sinne, and embrace the benefite of Christ with cherefull minde. For they can lyue no longer in sinne, whome the merite of Christ hath deliuered from the bondage of sinne, as Paule teacheth at large. Afterwarde he goeth with the Apostles into the Temple. Nowe it is plaine the Temple was a figure of Christ. Let vs therefore ioyne our selfe vnto him, and follow the Apostles, which shewe vs the waye howe we may be ioyned to Christ, and to his Church. And into the Church of Christ can we not be receyued, vnlesse we first forsake the tentes of Satan, vnder whom it becometh them to refuse to fight, which desire to be Christ his souldiers. Besides all this, it is sayd that he reioyced, and prayesd God. Let vs also reioyce in the Lord, and let vs prayse his goodnesse, which it becometh vs plainly to confesse, and to set forth. For they are in baine redeemed and deliuered, who are ashamed of Christ their Redemer, and of the benefite by him obtayned. Therfore he requireth of vs euery where confession of our fayth, and hath dedicated a remembraunce of his death in his mysticall supper, which he would haue alwayes to continue in his Church. It behoueth vs therfore to labour for these things, that being truly graft in Christ, and quickened with his spirite, we may reigne with him in heauen: to whome be prayse, honour, glozy and power, for euer. Amen.

The. xxj. Homelie.

AND all the people sawe him walke and prayse God. And they knewe that it was he that sate and begged at the beautifull gate of the Temple. And they woondred, and were sore astonied, at that which had happened vnto him. And as the halte which was healed helde Peter and Iohn, all the people ranne amazed to them in the porche that is called Salomons. When Peter sawe that, he aunswered to the people. Ye men of Israell, why marueyle ye at this, or why looke you so on vs, as though by our owne power and strength, we had made this man to goe?



VKE hath expounded the notable myracle whereby Peter healed the man, that was halt from his mothers wombe. The ende of this myracle was the same that is of all others, that is, that it shoulde serue to confirme the Apostles doctrine. Wherefore the Euangelist not contented

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to haue tolde the hystorie hereof onely, declared also what successe and effect followed of the same. And first he sheweth how the lame man toke the benefite of Christ, who (sayth he) ioyned himselfe vnto the Apostles, went with them into the Church, and openly set forth the prayles of God. By this example is shadowed vnto vs, what they ought to doe whome Christ hath restored againe through the vertue of his merite. They must embrace the Apostles doctrine, and thereby be openly ioyned to the Church, and declare the benefite of Gods grace, that it seeme not to be bestowed vpon unworthy persons. But Luke passeth to other matters, declaring what effect this great myracle toke among the people, and howe an occasion of preaching was thereby offered to Peter: where the proper and right vse of the whole hystorie sheweth it selfe.

The people (sayeth Luke) sawe the lame man walking and prayling God. And not only sawe him walking, but knew certainly it was he that was wont to sitte at the gate of the Temple to aske almes. Which thing maketh for prooffe of the truth of the myracle, least anye man might deeme there were anye craft or sleight vsed in the matter. Then being rauished with admiration, they ranne thicke and threfolde to the Apostles, whome the lame man for ioye had not yet let go and forsaken. Here we haue two things to obserue, the one worthy of great commendation, the other of reprehension, as more plainly shall appeare by Peters wordes.

First, being stricken with marueylous admiration, Luke sayth they were prouoked to runne to the Apostles, and to bethinke them of so straunge and vntoonted a matter: which no manne can denye, but was well done of them, and not without a cause. For we ought diligently to consider the workes of God, and to marueyle at the excellencie of them, for the which ende some Philosophers, not altogether vnbittily, haue sayde, that God made manne. Because that obseruation and marueyling, stayeth not in a certaine blinde and amazed dulnesse of the minde, but is a certayne preparation of the mynde, whereby we are drawne to the true knowledge of God. For God verily reuealeth himselfe and his will, in his worde, which being long since written, he hath commaunded alwayes to be preached in his Church. But such is the corruption of our minde, that vnlesse we be drawne by some forcible motion, we can neuer be brought from earthly things to the consideration of heavenly. Wherefore God ioyneth to his worde many times certaine signes, and most singuler workes, that they may awake our mindes out of that dull sleepe, and bring them to the consideration of his worde and will. And for this cause Christ oftentimes, eyther before his teaching, or in his teaching, vsed myracles, to make men the more ready to receyue his doctrine. Which myracles howe much good they did, appeareth by the example of Nicodemus and others, who by them came first to the knowledge of Christ. Nowe in all the myracles, iudgements, and workes of God, this is the chiefe ende and purpose, that by them we shoulde take occasion to ryle higher to the better knowledge of Gods will and pleasure. But here the sluggishnesse of this age is to be bewayled, whereby it cometh to passe, that many are waxed so deafe, that they neyther can heare nor see anye of the thinges whereby God puncheth vs and waketh vs vp to acknowledge our saluation. The word of the Gospell is preached, and the Lord commaundeth vs to watch.

We

How the people receyued the myracle.

To marueyle at the workes of God is necessary.

Iohn. 3.7.

Math. 24.
Luc. 21.

1. Theff. 5.
2. Pet. 3.

To bee too
much addic-
ted to myra-
cles is the be-
ginning of yd-
olatry.

Rom. 1.

We see every where horrible examples of Gods iudgements, wherewith he bridleth and punisheth the incurable wickednesse of this world. There are signes, wonders, and tokens of all sortes and kindes shewed. To conclude, whatsoever thinges Christ prophesied shoulde come to passe in the later age before his glorious coming, are dayly done in our sight and fulfilled. But we lying bolt bright and morning, regarde none of all these things, so that if there were none other signe or token, surely by the ouer great securitie and carelesnesse of the worlde, it maye be perceyued that these be the dangerous dayes wherof the Apostles many times haue admonished vs. But let vs awake (O brethren) and learne by this present example, the workes of God, that our marueyling at them, maye be an helpe for vs, to come to a more perfite knowledge of God.

The other thing in the people is to be reprehended. For although God pricked and stirred them by so notable a myracle, yet were their mindes and eyes still vpon the Apostles, whome they thought to be the authours of the myracle, whereas they ought to haue lift vp their mindes to the consideration of Iesus Christ, in whose name, and by whose power the myracle was wrought. This is the propertie of the fleshe, to sticke to the present and next causes, and to lift their minde no higher, to knowe the true and onely authour of all things that are done. And this is no small errour, for of this, all superstition and ydolatrie took their beginning. For hereof it came to passe, that the Gentiles worshipped the Sunne & Moone, and the other planets as Gods. For in ascribing to them the benefites that God by them bestowed on mankind, what other thing did they? The same errour moued them to make these men Gods, which had beeie authours to them of any publike weale or pleasure. And this errour staped not in men, but bicause of the benefites they receyued by beastes and other creatures, they thought there was a certaine kinde of Godheade in brute beastes, riuers, fountaines, trees, and herbes, and turned the glorie of the immortal God into the likenesse of men, flying fowles, and four-footed beastes. Neyther did the ydolatrie bled among the Christians, spring of anye other occasion. For when the myracles wrought in times past by Saints, began (to doltrinally) to be written by those that were vnlearned, & were also more foolishly preached and blazed in the pulpets, straight way the ignorant people thought them to be done through the vertue and power of the Saints. And so another errour sprang of that false opinion, and caused them that were sicke, or in other great daungers to make bowes to the Saintes, by whose helpe they hearde that eyther themselves, or other before had bene deliuered. And bicause God sometymes mainteyned the remembrance of his Saintes, by myracles wrought at their sepulchres, they thought some godly power was also in those places, whereof it came to passe, that they tyed worshipping and inuocation to places pecoliar. And least anye thing shoulde be wanting to this superstition and ydolatrie, Satan beganne to beautifie the images of the Saintes, with signes and myracles, wherby the matter came so farre out of frame, that now the thinges due to Christ alone, were not only attributed to Saintes, but also to the Saintes images, which superstitious men had set by against the commaundement of Gods maiestie. And it was not ynough to make bowes to the Saintes, but there must also be some famous place & ymage of the Saint wrought

and

and carued. That these things were of a truth done, we are taught both by histories and examples of superstitious men, which shew vs in these dayes an infinit number of them. Wherfore where the negligent consideration of myracles, and the foolish admiration of them, hath giuen occasion of fowle error, and manifest vngodlynesse: we are warned that whatsoeuer myracles are done, without the doctrine of Gods worde, which teacheth vs trulye to iudge of them, they ought neuer to be regarded. For that diuers signes and wonders aswell true as false be wrought amongst men, we are taught by the holye Scriptures. They are called true myracles, when that thing is truly done, that is sayd to be done, and which beareth witnesse to the doctrine of truth, such as were sometimes the myraculous workes of the Apostles done by Christes institution. They are called false which deceyue vs by some lying shew, as Charmers and Juglers vse: or which call men from God, and from the faith and doctrine of the truth. Such as sometimes Iannes and Iambres shewed before Pharao. And such as are ascribed to Antichrist, and to the deceyuers in the later dayes. And God suffereth them otherwhyles to be done in the sight of his people, that in the elect he may trye the constancie of their faith, as Moses testifyeth, Deut. 13. and in the reprobate he maye exercise the seueritie of his iudgement: bicause through the efficacie of errour (as Paule sayeth) they are seduced, which would not admit the loue of the truth. Therefore myracles are neuer so to be taken, that we must cleaue onelye to them, or to their doctrine that worke them: but we must examine them, after the rule of Gods worde, that in those which beare witnesse to the truth, and teach vs to trust in god, we may acknowledge God to be the authoz, and reiect all other as false, by whose baytes, Satan bleseth to lye in wayte against our faith and saluation. If this thing be not obserued, we shall through our owne default be deceyued, not onely by false myracles, but also by true, whereof God is the authoz, whyle we haue the persons, regarde not the ende wherfore they are done. Whereof this place giueth vs an euident example, and another hereafter is written of the people of Lystra, which tooke occasion to commit ydolatrie of a myracle done by Paule, as in his place shall appeare.

But let vs consider Peter which of the peoples amazednesse taketh occasion to preach. Thinke you he abuseth the ignorance and errour of the people: Goeth he about by this meane to get himselfe and his fellowes authority, which he might easily haue done: No verily. Naye, he beginneth to preach Christ, and defendeth his honour and glorie. There are fower members or principall pointes of his sermon. First, he correcteth the ignorance of the people, & sheweth them that there is nothing here done through the power and vertue, or holynesse of men. Secondly, he declareth God to be the authoz of the myracle, who hath wrought the same by his sonne: where he also admonisheth them of their heynous offence committed against the sonne of God. Thirdly, he requireth of them repentance. Last of all, bicause the Christian religion did seme to repugne with Moses and the Prophets, he teacheth them that they did set forth Christ, and that they must of necessitie beleue Christ, vnlesse they will seme grievously to offend against Moses and the Prophetes. And therewithall he also teacheth that Christ which was promised to the fathers, belonged also to them, least they should be drowned in dispaire, through the conscience of their sinnes.

But

Diuerstie of
signes or mi-
racles.

Marc. 16.

Math. 10.

2. Thess. 2.

Math. 24.

Actes. 14.

The argu-
ment of Pe-
ters sermon.

Peter putteth away error and ignorance.

Jerem. 1.

The Saints or holy men ascribe all glory to God.

Esa. 42.

Iohn. 1.

Iohn. 3.
Math. 11.

Actes. 14.

Apoc. 22.

But at this present we will speake but of the first part, onely purposing to intreate of the rest in their place and time.

First he goeth about to remove ignorance and error out of their minds. This is the right and most commodious waye of teaching the truth. For mans properie and condicion is like to the earth whereof he was made. The earth yeldeth thornes and bryers of it owne accorde, neyther bringeth it forth good seede with any increase, unlesse it be diligently censed and ridde of them. So the minde of man corrupt with originall sinne, bringeth forth errors of it selfe, which except they be strongly repulsed, it neyther can suffer the doctrine of truth, nor receyue any fruite or commoditie thereby. Wherefore the Lorde commaundeth the Prophete to breake downe, and rote by, before he builde or set. And Peter is not colde in this behalfe, as though he shunned honour for ciuillie and modestie sake, as ambitious folke vse, which hunt for glorie, euen then when they feyne to be contempters thereof. But framing his talke by an interrogatiue point, maketh it the more vehement, saying: Ye men of Israell, why marueyle yee at this, or why looke you so on vs, as though by our owne power and strength wee had made this man to go? These wordes saue of some reprehension. I pray you (sayth he) what cause hath moued you to conceyue such abashment of this myracle, wheras not long sithens many such were wrought by Christ: howe cometh it to passe you remember not them? And then it should easily appeare who is the authoz of this. Surely in haine you looke vpon vs: yea, your error is so great that it may not be winked at. For our power or holinesse hath herein done nothing. But it is anothers worke, who must haue all the prayse of that is done.

Let vs obserue in this place the modestie, and truth of the Apostles, whereby they so challenge vnto Christ, all honor and glorie, that they reserue nothing to themselves of that is due to him. This is the properie of all the Saintes. For they acknowledge Christes voyce, saying by the Prophete: I am the Lorde, this is my name. And my glorie will I giue to none other. There are examples of this endeuour, not only in this place, but also otherwheres. The Baptist when hee was asked whether hee were Meisias, the sauour, he giueth all that prayse to Christ onely, whose forerunner onely he confesseth himselfe to be. The same, before his Disciples which of a carnall zeale enuied Christ, testified that Christ was the bridegrome of the Church, to whome all men must be brought, and sheweth that all power and glorie was giuen vnto him from God the father, and sendeth his Disciples vnto him. And Paule had rather to be stoned, than he woulde receyue any godly honor, when they of Lystra offered it him of their owne free motion and will. Of this minde, it is plaine, also the Angels are. For where Iohn being rauished with the excellencie of revelations, would haue worshipped an Angell, he sayde vnto him: See thou doe it not, for I am thy fellow seruant, and of thy brethren the Prophetes, and of them which keepe the wordes of the prophecie of this booke. Worship thou God. Where vpon Augustine in his. xlii. Epistle, disputing of the honour due to God only, writeth of the Angells, whom he calleth the spirituall creatures, on this wise: Howe much more godly it is, and in subiection to God, so muche lesse it doth vouchsafe it selfe of such honour, as it knoweth belongeth but to God. And a little afterwarde, comparing the euill aungels (who sayth he,

ioye

for and are delighted in the errors of men) with the good, he addeth: wherefore euen as wicked pryde, whether it bee of men, or of Spirites, commaundeth or desireth these diuine honours to be giuen vnto them: so, godly humilitie, whether it be of men, or of holy Aungels, hath refused these things being offered them, and sheweth to whome it is due. Of these may be taken a sure rule, wher by to iudge as well of all apparitions, as doctrines. For whosoener teacheth vs to trust in God, and to serue him, and to worship one God in Iesus Christ, whether they be Aungels or men, they ought to be taken for the holy ministers of God, and we may safely beleue them. But whosoener teacheth vs to take the glozve of saluation from Christ, and to conuey it to himselfe, or to other creatures, and seeketh health in mennes owne workes, accursed be he, yea, if he were an aungell from heauen. All apparitions of spirites, counterfeiting the soules of men departed this life, and teaching that they must be redeemed with sacrifices of Masse, and such like workes, are put to flight by this dart. Likewise all false teachers which so abuse the simplicitie of men, that they chalenge to themselves the glozve of redeeming and forgiving of sinnes. And Peter by his example condemneth the Romishe Antichristes, which glozve in the seate and succession of Peter, of which number it is reported one sayd: that there was nothing more profitable and plenteous than Christian religion. For by it, it came to passe, that he and his like, were Lordes of the world. So the saying of one of them rashly vttered, bewrayde the minde and opinion of them all.

We are also admonished by Peters wordes, whome we should take for the author of all myzacles. Wherein men for the most part respect two things: the power and holynesse of them, by whose ministerie they are wrought. But Peter teacheth vs that neyther of these is the cause efficient of these myzacles, in that he reprehendeth the Jewes bicause they thought so great a thing was wrought by the power and godlinesse of the Apostles. And there want not reasons whereby to proue Peters saying. For they are called myzacles, that are wrought eyther against the course of nature, or beside it. But God only is the Lord of nature, which hath giuen all power to Christ in heauen and in earth. Wherefore it becometh vs also to acknowledge him the author of all myzacles. For what can men doe against the order of nature, which can doe nothing in the thinges wrought after the course of nature. It is a naturall thing, that by age mannes stature should encrease, untill he come to a iust measure and proportion, and that when age commeth, he shoulde ware gray heared. Now, what man is there that by his carefulnesse and industry can adde one cubite to his stature, or make one heare of his heade white or blacke: No, there is nothing here to be attributed to the holinesse of the person, as though that were the chiefe cause of the myzacle, whereas we knowe there haue bene many holy men which coulde worke no myzacles. For myzacles are wont to be wrought, not for their sakes which doe them, but most commonly for the saluation of other. For the which cause God would many times vse the meane of wicked persons, that nothing shoulde be attributed to the merites of men. So we see Iudas numbred amongst them, to whome Christ committed the preaching of the Gospell, and gaue power to worke myzacles. And Christ sayth in another place, that many in the later day shall glozve in their myzacles, whom he sayth he will not cast of, for that they boast of a thing that is vnttrue, but

Galat. 1.

God alone is
the author of
myzacles.Math. 28.
Iohn. 3.

Math. 6. 5.

Math. 7.

bicause they be workers of wickednesse. Therefore as myracles be not alwayes sure testimonies of the holynesse of men: so neyther must they be ascribed to the holynesse of them that doe them. For what can man doe contrary to nature, which by reason of inwarde corruption, is unworthy of the naturall and daily benefites of God: Therefore God onely is to be taken for the author of myracles, of these I meane, that serue for confirmation of our faith and saluation. And he worketh these myracles, not bicause we deserve them: but for that he is carefull for our saluation. For they are testimonies of the truth of his doctrine, & stirre by mens mindes to the consideration of him. That was also the meaning of them, which were wont to be done about Saints tombes. For the Lord by them ment to confirme their doctrine, and to testifie their immortallitie and blisse, which were cruelly tormented by the wicked persecutors of the faith, that they which otherwise shoulde be offended at their death might be comforted. Let vs therefore hedge in and compasse all myracles with these limites, that all the glory of them maye be ascribed to God alone. Whosoever shall passe these boundes, they shall eyther deceyue others being not aware, with their myracles, or else by others be deceyued themselves.

Let no man yet so take our saying, as though we enuied the holye Saintes of God their honor, and glory. For we ascribe vnto them whatsoever the holy ghost in the Scriptures attributeth to them. We acknowledge them while they were on the earth, to haue bene singuler vessels and instrumentes of Gods glorye and grace: whose doctrine, whosoever will be saued, ought to holde with firme faith, and to imitate the example of their life. For we knowe that Christ hath sayde: Hee that heareth you, heareth me. &c. And we embrace this saying of Paule: Be ye followers of me as I am of Christ. And now we beleue they are in heauen, taken from all the cares, labours, and griefes of this worlde, as the holy men testifie of Abraham and the other Patriarches in the Prophete. In the meane season whatsoever belongeth to the gouernance of this worlde, and to the businesse of our redemption, we teache it ought to be attributed to God, through Iesus Christ. For as in the creation of this worlde, he vsed the helpe and counsell of none other: so will he that none other shall be partaker with him of the glory of our redemption. Wherefore let vs thinke it vnlawfull to take any thing from him, or to challenge to our selfe, or any other, any manner of prayse therefore. But let vs constantlye trust in him, and cleaue onely to him, by his beloued sonne Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honor, glory and power for euer. Amen.

The. xxij. Homelie.

THE God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Iacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified his sonne Iesus, whome yee deliuered, and denied in the presence of Pylate, when he had iudged him to be loosed. But you denied the holy and iust, and desired a murderer to be giuen you, and killed the Lorde of lyfe: whome God hath raysed from death, of the which we are witnesses. And his name through the fayth of his name, hath made this man sounde. And the fayth which is by him, hath giuen to him this health in the presence of you all.

What we
ought after
a godly sort
to beleue of
Saintes.

Math. 10.

Iohn. 13.

1. Cor. 11.

E say. 63.



We haue declared the first part of Peters sermon, wherein he confuteth the ignorance of the people, and sheweth that the myracle done on the lame man was to be attributed, neither to the power nor holynesse of men. Nowe let vs see the seconde part, wherein he maketh God the author of the myracle, and teacheth them to haue a respecte vnto Christ Iesus, in whose name it was done. And because this is the chiefe poynt of all the sermon, he handleth the same verie industriously and in apt order. First, he propoundeth the summe of the whole matter in fewe wordes. Next, he telleth them of their cruell wickednesse committed against the sonne of God. Then at last, returning to the purpose, he declareth plainly all the whole meaning of the myracle.

The summe of all the matter is: The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified his sonne Iesus. He comprehendeth in these wordes, both how God is the author of the myracle, and also howe the finall cause of the same was the glorifying of Iesus Christ, the sonne of God. And as at the first he shewed nothing was to be attributed to the power or holynesse of man: so nowe he teacheth that all is to be referred to God the only author, and to the glory or setting forth of his sonne. Where we haue two things to obserue.

First, howe in speaking of God, he calleth him the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, and to be short, the God of the fathers, which title or style God himselfe bleth often in the olde Testament. And this is a great token of Gods loue, whereby he declareth to vs his goodnesse. The Princes of this worlde take to them names of the people and Nations that they haue banquished and ouerrunne, and thinke it a great glorye to be called Parthians, Gothickes, Almanickes, Africanes and Numidians. But what other thing doe men learne by these styles, but that they haue destroyed this people, and spoiled their countries with fire and sword: God dealeth farre otherwise, which will be named after those men, whome of fauour, deseruing no such thing, he hath bounde vnto him by an everlasting couenant: and of whome he looketh neyther for great spoyle, nor any profyte, but such as himselfe bringeth forth in them. Yet Peter herein had respect to an higher matter, and giueth those tytles to God which he thought were chiefly agreeing with the present matter in hande. For first where he nameth the fathers, he admonisheth them of the promises, which God in times past made to the fathers concerning Christ. For to Abraham it was sayde: I will be thy God, and the God of thy seede after thee. In thy seede shall all the Nations of the earth be blessed. Which promise we reade was repeated afterwarde in Isaac and Iacob. To speake nothing of Dauid and the Prophetes, which are busily occupied in setting forth the same promises. It was profitable, yea, necessary that those promises shoulde be repeated, because the Jewes a little before, had denyed them all, in the presence of Pilate, saying they had, nor looke for none other king but Caesar, as hereafter we shall heare. Therefore because they shoulde not thinke themselves utterly fallen from the couenant and promises, and premised to be past all hope of saluation: Peter sheweth them that the same God liued and reigned

The author
and finall
cause of the
myracle.

The God of
Abraham,
Isaac, Ja-
cob, and of
the fathers.

Gene. 22.

Gen. 26. 28

Wb. ij.

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Deut. 13.

Math. 15.
23. &c.

Rom. 4.

Iohn. 3.
Math. 8.The purport
or ende of the
myracles of
the newe Te-
stament.

Iohn. 20.

Iohn. 5.

yet still which in time past made the couenaunt with the fathers, and had not forsaken Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob: but euen as in the beginning, so now also, he woulde be called their God, so that they woulde turne vnto him. Furthermore, to auoide the suspicion wherewith the Apostles were charged, this title and style of God serued very much. For many suspected that they preached a newe God, a newe faith, a new religion, hitherto vnknewe to the fathers, for the which cause many would not heare them, & many thought them worthy death according to the law of Moyses. But Peter vsing this title of God so openly, protesteth as it were, that he acknowledged none other God, than he which shewed himselfe in times past to the fathers, nor preacheth none other faith or religion, than that whereby the fathers pleased God, and were saued. To conclude, he teacheth them what fathers the Iewes ought to marke and followe, in faith and religion. They glozied in certaine fathers of a later time, such as after Moyses and the Prophetes, came in, and were the authours of manifolde superstition. Whose traditions they obserued so straightly, that they had rather breake the lawes of God, than chaunge or leaue vndone any iote or poynt of them: which thing Christ many times layde to their charge. Neyther did any thing more set them against Christ and his Apostles, than for that they did by their doctrine impugne the ordinances of the elders. Therefore Peter maketh mention of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, to declare that all fathers are not to be followed in religion. For as God alone is the father of all men, and Iesus Christ alone, the maister of all men, whom the father hath appointed to be the teacher of all the worlde: so must we onely follow their steppes, whose faith and religion we knowe pleased God, and of whose faith and integritie God doth bouchsafe to beare witnesse. In the number of whome, Abraham is the chiefe, whome the Scripture therefore calleth a father of the beleuing, and of many Nations, bicause as manye as embrace the faith of Iesus Christ, which was imputed to him for righteousness, appertaine vnto him. Vnto the same Abraham Christ beareth witnesse, where he sayth he reioyced to see his daye, and sayth, as many as shall come from the East and West into the Church of God, shall sit downe with him in the kingdome of heauen. Hereof let the men of our age learne what vanitie it is to bragge of those yonger sort of fathers, which haue deuised or followed a newe trade of saluation besides Christ. Except we become the children of Abraham by faith in Christ, we can be defended by no helpe or authoritie of others, no though they were kings and Emperors.

Secondly, let vs marke howe he sayth: The God of our fathers glorified his sonne Iesus. Yet he speaketh of the myracle done vpon the lame man, the ende whereof he vttereth in these wordes, we are here taught that the glorifying of Iesus Christ, the sonne of God, is the marke and ende of all the myracles of the new Testament whereto al they also, which glorie in their myracles, ought to haue respect. The Euangelist by expresse wordes vttereth this ende, saying: Manye other signes did Iesus, which are not written in this booke. These are written, that ye might beleue that Iesus is that Christ the sonne of God. And Christ himselfe speaking of the power of working myracles, and of the iudgement giuen to him of his father, teacheth this to be the ende therof, that all men might honour the sonne, as they honour the father. And reasoning with his Disciples of Lazarus sicknesse, he

he sayeth: This infirmitie is not to death, but for the glorye of God, that the sonne of God may be glorified by it. **Hereby it appeareth howe we shoulde iudge of those myracles and signes wherewith some men labour to seeke their priuate glorye, and to bring men vnder them as schollers and seruantes, whome Christ hath redeemed and sanctified with the pyre of hys bloude.**

But bicause Peter had occasion to make mention of Christ, he admonisheth his hearers very aptly and commodiously, of the heynous trespasse which they committed against him. And this doth he not lightly, as one that doth but touch and go, but layeth all the heynousnesse thereof open before their eyes. For his Oration ascendeth as it were by certaine steppes, the ende whereof is, that they shoulde be stricken with the consideration of so grievous an offence, and be enflamed with repentance, and desire of saluation in Christ. First he sayth, they deliuered the sonne of God to the Gentiles to be mocked and crucified. But it is an horrible offence to deliuer an innocent to death, and there are terrible iudgements of God against them that pollute themselves with bloude. *Loke Numer. 35.* But here is a greater and a more horrible thing. For where God had chosen and consecrated to himselfe the Jewes out of all Nations, none of them ought to haue bene deliuered to the prophane Gentyles, to be mocked and put to death, without a prophane contempt and treading vnder foote of God and his glorye. Which seemeth to me was the cause that Christ speaking of his death, maketh mention so many times how they should deliuer him to the Gentyles. And that they thus did, not by chaunce and at all aduentures, but by the common counsell and consent of the Elders, and with the liking and allowance of the people which followed them vnto Pylates house, as the Evangelistes testifie. Besides this, in the seconde place he sayth: And yee denied him before Pylate. And he speaketh not of a certaine light and tryling deniall of him, but of such an one, as whereby they renounced all the promises of God, touching their Melsias, and king, that shoulde redeeme them, and denied the hope of the fathers, wherewith so many yeares, they wayted for the coming of their Sauour, as we reade they did. *Iohn. 19.* For where Pylate still repeated to them the name of their king, respecting no doubt the Melsias promised, & which they all hytherto looked for, they with great impietie crie out: we haue no king but Caesar. Was then the promise made vnto Dauid, to be vnderstanded of Caesar, that of his stocke one shoulde be borne that should be a king for ever? And is it to be vnderstanded of Tiberius, that naughtie and wicked person, where it is sayd: Behold, thy king cometh vnto thee, euen the righteous, and sauour, lowlye, and so forth? Therefore Peter chargeth them with such an impietie, as whereby they spoyled themselves of saluation, and all the promises of health and hope of saluation. And least they shoulde lay the fault on Pylate, as though they did it for feare of him, he sayeth they themselves did it where Pylate iudged him to be loosed, and gaue openly a testimonie of his righteousness and innocencie. Therefore he affirmeth the Jewes were in fault, who to fulfill all wickednesse and mischief, made both themselves and their children guiltie of his bloude, by publike and solemne protestation. These thinges be horrible, and yet the Jewes wickednesse did not herein stape or ende. For Peter addeth: you haue denied that holy and righteous, and deli-

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Iohn. 11.

*Hee telleth
them of their
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gainst Christ*

*Math. 20.
Luc. 18.*

*Math. 27.
Luc. 23.*

red a murtherer to be giuen you, and haue kylled the author and Lorde of life. He chargeth them with so bitter hatred against Christ, and with such blindness, that they were not ashamed to preferre a bloudye murtherer before Christ. And to make their wickednesse seeme the more heynous, he bleseth a comparison. You denyed Iesus which was an holy person and a iust, and in whome neyther the Bishops (although they did what they coulde) nor Pylate, nor Herode, coulde finde any faulte. Furthermore, you shewe him which was the authoz of lyfe, yea the Lorde of lyfe and death, whome you ought to haue knowne by reason of his myracles, & the late raising againe of Lazarus. In the meane season you required a theefe, a murtherer, and a rebell, to be deliuered you and set at libertie. And where it was in your choise, and election, whether you woulde haue, forgetting all the benefites of Christ, you were not ashamed to preferre a wicked theefe before him. What coulde be sayde more cruell, grienous, and horrible? Yet Peter speaketh these things in that Citie, yea, in that Temple, where they bare all the swinge, that were the chiefe authozs of this wickednesse, and who he knewe as yet breathed hatred against Christ. Therefore we are here againe taught, with what libertie, open wickednesse should be reproued, by them whome the Lorde hath appointed to be watchmen in his Church, to shewe the daunger, and sworde hanging ouer vs, least men shoulde perishe through their owne slothe and negligence. And there is no cause why we shoulde harken to them, which saye there is no neede of such vehemencie in these dayes, forasmuch as there is none to whome such crueltie can be objected. Nay, the Jewes onely haue not thus sinned, but there be euen in these dayes that sinne as grienously, as euer they did. A number deliuer Christ vnto death, in that they euery where kill and burne the faithfull seruantes of Christ. Many denye him for feare, more for fauour, following the pleasure of men. And they sinne not of simplicitie and ignorance, as Peter herafter excuseth the Jewes. For we haue seene many which quite against their conscience haue denyed Christ. My heart trembleth as oft as I remember that heynous offence, that was committed by them, who not onely denied the truth themselves, but compelled those that belonged to them, to denie the same, and embraced a forme of religion, which the very authoz and inuentoz thereof allowed not. The like impietie to that that was then committed, hath not bene hearde of. And God graunt they may all repent of their wickednesse, that were faultie therein. In the meane season we see howe these bloudye Barabasses euery where reigne, flourish, and are had in great price, which for money are hyred and bled to shed bloude, and prouoke the wrath of God, and horrible destruction against their countrey, through their vngodlynesse. Therefore such must be accused, and where these things be openly committed, and accounted no more for wicked, there ought no modestie at all to be vsed. But oh impietie and vngraciousnesse. For now a dayes amongst the professors of Christianitie, it is not lawfull to saye that, that was lawfull for Peter to saye in the bloudie Citie of Ierusalem. We be therefore in this respect, worse than Jewes, that where we committe the same offences that they committed, we cannot with like patience abide to heare the worde of correction as they hearde it.

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the authoꝝ of this myꝛacle, and to shew all the vse therof. Yet first he preacheth the resurrection of Christ, both foꝝ that the reason of our saluation purchased by Christ, consisteth in it, and also foꝝ that it commodiously doth away the offence oꝝ slander of the crosse. You (sayth he) killed the authoꝝ of lyfe, but God hath rayſed him from death, whereof wee are witnesses. It was needefull that these things shoulde be ioyned to the premisses, least any man might thinke the wicked had ouer much power permitted them. Foꝝ these things teach that their crueltie and iniquitie coulde derogate nothing from Christ, as who being rayſed from death, doth nowe liue and raigne in heauen. Herof we may take a generall comfort. Foꝝ as the crueltie and tirannie of the Iewes could nothing hinder oꝝ let Christ: so whosoever doth imitate the Iewes impietie and tirannie, cannot hurt the members of Christ. In dede the Princes of the worlde ioyne together, and desire to ouerthrowe the kingdome of Christ. But the Lord from high laugheth at their deuises, whose counsaile shall stande foꝝ euer. Looke the Psalmes. ij. and. xxxij. Let no man therefore be afrayde of men, who though they rage neuer so much, haue no power but on our goods and body, which otherwise is mortall and shall perishe. Yea, neyther haue they power thereon farther than God permitteth, who hath all the heares of our heade numbred. But the soule being out of all dannger and hazarde trusteth, in Christ hir redæmer, and shall neuer be deceyued of hir hope.

But let vs see how Peter setteth foꝝth the order of the myꝛacle. His name through the faith of his name hath made this man whole, whome you see and knowe. It seemeth a darke kinde of speache, except a man marke the order of the wordes. And it deceyueth manye, bicause they thinke (nomen) this worde name, is put in the accusatiue case, whereas all the order of construction plainly proueth it to be the nominatiue. Thus must it be set in order and construed: The name of Iesus Christ hath strengthened and made whole this man whome ye see present, and that through the beliefe which hee hath in the name of Christ. And foꝝ the moze playne vnderstanding, he addeth by waye of exposition: The faith which is by him, hath giuen to him this health in the pꝛesence of you all. The sense of all together is, that Iesus Christ, thꝛough his name, that is, by his vertue, power, and merite, hath giuen helth and safetie to this lame man, bicause he hath belæued in him. He repeateth the name of Christ, and faith of Christ the oftner, to the intent the glory of Christ might seeme the greater, in setting foꝝth whereof, the Apostles thought they had neuer done ynough, as appeareth euerye where in their writings and sermons. These wordes surely are not light-lye to be passed ouer. Foꝝ where we sayde that in this lame man was set foꝝth to vs a figure of all mankinde: in the healing of him we may beholde all the order of our saluation. Here therefore is declared who is the true authoꝝ of our saluation, then the meane, whereby we receyue saluation, and the ende whereunto all these things serue and tende.

As concerning the authoꝝ of saluation, Peter alleageth the name of Iesus Christ, whome a little before he called the authoꝝ and Lord of life. That this worde name, is taken foꝝ power, rule, oꝝ merite, it is moze euident than needeth with many wordes to be declared. And where at first he excluded all power and holynesse of men from this businesse, and nowe maketh mention of Christ onely, by whose meane and power all this mat-

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Math. 10.

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authoꝝ of sal-
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Esay. 43.

The meane
whereby we
apprehende
saluation,
is faith.

Iohn. 6.

Math. 9.

Luke. 7.

1. Cor. 1.

Math. 1.

Psal. 110.

ter is brought to passe: it easily appeareth that the origen and beginning of our saluation is to be referred to Christ only. For by his merite we are deliuered from sinne, and redeemed from death and the tyrannie of the deuill. And himselfe in the Prophete testifieth, there is none other redeemer but he only. But we shall haue occasion to speake more hereof in the fourth Chapter, where Peter testifieth there is none other name vnder heauen, giuen vnto man, by the which he may be saued. &c.

Howbeit, it is not ynoughe to knowe that all saluation is containe in Christ, vnlesse we vnderstande howe to attaine and take holde of the saluation in him. But Peter sheweth that also where he sayeth, this man was made sounde and whole by faith, that is, bicause of his fayth in the name of Iesus Christ. Againe: The faith which is by him, hath giuen to him this health. Therefore we take holde of saluation by faith: and beside fayth, there is nothing in vs whereby to take holde of it, bicause we be graffed in Christe none other waye than by fayth. Hee that eateth my fleshe, and drinketh my bloude, dwelleth in mee, and I in him. For where he is departed from vs in bodie, and dwelleth in vs by his Spirite, and liueth and reyneth in vs by his Spirite: it is onely a worke of fayth, whereby we apprehende him, and the saluation in him. For the which cause oftentimes fayth is sayd to saue and to iustifie. So Christ sayth to the woman which was sicke of the bloody fluxe. Thy fayth hath made thee whole. And he promiseth saluation to Marie Magdalen by the same wordes. Christ onely in deede saueh and iustifieth. For in him is life, and he is made vnto vs of God the father, wisdom, righteousness, satisfaction, sanctification and redemption. But bicause faith graffeth vs in Christ, and maketh vs partakers of the goodnesse that is in him: therfore saluation and iustification is not without a cause attributed thereto. Marke now the definition of faith, which Peter compriseth in these wordes, where he sayth: The fayth of his name, and the fayth that is by him. For by these wordes he declareth that he speaketh of such a faith, as stayeth vpon Christ, and which acknowledgeth and beleueth Christ to be such an one, as he is described in name to be. The name of the sonne of God incarnate, is Iesus Christ. He receyued the name of IESVS of the Aungell before he was bozne, but in his Circumcision he tooke it againe, after the solemne vsage of the people of Iewes, which signifyeth a saviour or Redemer, as sayeth the Aungell: Thou shalt call his name IESVS, for he shall saue his people from their sinnes. This worde Christ with the Latines is as much to saye, as annointed, and signifyeth the maner of our saluation and redemption. For Kings and Priests in the old time were annointed, and for that cause were called Meschijm, and Christi, that is to saye, annointed. So it behoued the Saviour that was promised shoulde be called, bicause he is that true King, whome God hath set ouer his holy hill of Sion, and whose kingdome is stretched ouer all the world. See the Psalmes. ii. lxxij. Zach. 9. For he like a faithfull king, hath deliuered his people from the tyrannye of the deuill, he ruleth and gouerneth them, defendeth and enricheth them moste bounteously with the treasures of his heavenly kingdome. The same is a priest for euer, according to the order of Melchisedech. For he taught in times past, and daily doth teach in his Church. And by the onely sacrifice of his body hath purged all the sinnes of men. And now he maketh intercession for

for

for vs before his father, being a faithfull bishop, to performe all the things which remayned to be done for vs with the father. Therefore whosoever truly acknowledge the sonne of God to be a king and Priest, and the only sauour of the Church of God, and stave vpon him only: they beleue truly in the name of the sonne of God, which the Apostle teacheth to be the chiefe commaundement of God.

The ende or fruite of this faith is the wholenesse and soundnesse of all man, such as we see happened to this lame man and halt. Christ because of his faith bestowed on him perfite health of body, so that now he was able to walke, to leape and to skippe. And that his soule and conscience was likewise healed, appeared by that he prayesed God, and ioyned himselfe to the Apostles. Therefore Christ hath made vs all perfite whole by faith. And he deliuereth vs not from sinne and the punishment therof alone, but also regenerateth vs by the immortall worde of God, through the operation of his spirite. Whereby it cometh to passe, that we vnderstande the things that be heauenly, frame our selues to the will of God, resist the desires of the fleshe, and finally can doe all things in Christ, which strengthneth vs. And after this life attayne to the perfite saluation and true blisse, which is prepared for vs in heauen. Into this blisse the soule departing this worlde, by faith is receyued, and cometh not into iudgement. And the bodie when it shall haue put of all corruption, being raysed vp in the later daye by the trumpe and voyce of an Archangell, shall rise againe. Therefore this is a most large and ample fruite of faith, which also we can attaine to, none other waye, than by faith in Christ. Let vs therefore studie the worde of God, by the which God giueth vs faith. Let vs ioyne seruent prayers to our studie, that being quickened through this faith, we may attayne perfite health, both of bodie and soule, and come to the possession of heauen in Iesus Christ, our only sauour, king and Priest: to whome be prayse, honour, power and glozy for euer. Amen.

1. Iohn. 3.

The fruite
of faith.

1. Pet. 1.

Phil. 4.

Iohn. 5.
1. Thess. 4.

The.xxiiij. Homelie.

AND now (brethren) I knowe that you did it through ignoraunce, as did also your Rulers. But God which before hath shewed by the mouth of all his Prophetes, howe Christ shoulde suffer, hath thus wise fulfilled. Repent you therefore and conuert, that your sinnes may be done awaye. When the time of refreshing cometh, which we shall haue of the presence of the Lord, and when God shall sende him which before was preached vnto you, that is to witte, Iesus Christ, which must receyue heauen vntill the time, that all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophetes, since the worlde beganne, be restored againe.



The Apostle Peter in the seconde parte of his sermon touching the myracle done vpon the lame man, hath so declared God to be the author thereof, that he hath also shewed the Jewes of their great wickednesse committed agaynst Iesus Christ the sonne of God. And where there was nothing more horrible and cruell than this fact of theirs: it is no doubt but a great number of them in their consciences were not a

Cc. j.

little

little wounded and feared. Wherefore it was necessary to shewe them the waye of repentance and saluation. This doth he in this place, which is the thirde member of his sermon, wherein he marueylously frameth himselfe to their disposition and capacite. First bicause they seemed to stande vpon the pitte of desperation, he teacheth them that there is yet hope of pardon and saluation. Then sheweth he them the way of saluation, and exhorteth and moueth them with most weightie reasons to take holde of the same. All which thinges being discusied, shall much serue for our instruction. For they teache vs that God will likewise pardon them which haue most grievously sinned: and they shew what way of saluation they must take, which will be reconciled vnto God, and are desirous to be saued.

He putteth
them that
killed Christ
in hope of
pardon and
saluation.

This beginning is very wittie and commodious, in that he teacheth them they be not yet past hope of saluation. For except sinners vnderstande this, in vaine shall we exhort them to repentance, bicause they will thinke it cannot profite them. And then it will come to passe that eyther they will become stubborne, and heape sinne vpon sinne, or else will be swallowed vp of desperation, as we reade Iudas was, which thing was the cause that the Prophetes among the grievous reprehensions wherewith they accused the sinnes of the people, and threatened them punishment, did intermeddle promises and oracles of Christ our sauour, that being feared with the conscience of sinne, they might lift vp their mindes againe through faith in the sauour promised them, and learne to seeke saluation in him. Peter followeth the industrie of these Prophetes, which knewe it belonged to his dutie, not to feare the people from Christ, by threatening wordes, but to winne them vnto him. Which ende and marke the Ministers of Christ in these dayes, ought to set before them. But let vs see the arguments wherewith Peter encourageth them to hope for pardon, and saluation.

How pretence
of ignorance
excuseth.
1. Cor. 2.

First he mitigateth their offence by reason and pretence of ignorance. I knowe (sayth he) that you did it through ignorance, as did also your Rulers. For if they (as Paule sayth) had had knowledge, they would not haue crucified the Lorde of glory. Yet Peters wordes are not so to be taken, as though he woulde nowe extenuate or excuse their wickednesse, which before he so set forth & exaggarated. For so could he not do without suspicion of lightnesse. And ignorance of it selfe excuseth not the things that are committed against the glory of God: yea, ignorance is no small fault, considering we knowe that men are created to that ende, to knowe God, to worship him, and glorifie him. But he meaneth to make a difference betwene the Jewes sinne and the sinne against the holy ghost. This sinne is when men wittinglye and willingly cast away the knownen truth, and Christ whome they knew in their mindes, and so make warre with God, and his Christ, as is euident Iudas the traytor, Iulian the Apostata, and such other whelpes of that haire, did. Christ testifieth that such mennes sinnes shall not be forgiven. And Iohn forbiddeth vs to praye for it. The reason hereof the Apostle in the .vi. Chapter to the Hebrewes, rendreth by a feate similitude taken from the earth. For as the earth being well husbanded, and watered from aboue, and yet remayning barren and fruitlesse, by that argument sheweth sufficiently that it will neuer be good: so, if men be not mollified with the knowledge of Iesus Christ, which only seasoneth the mindes of men to saluation, and maketh them fruitfull, but become the more sauage, and of pur-

Math. 12.
1. Ioh. 5.

pose

pose reiect and impugne the same : certes they plainly ynough betoꝛay that they be of the number of reprobates, of whose saluation nothing is to be hoped. Therefore Peter cleareth his hearers of this sinne to declare that they ought not despaire of the forgiuenesse of their sinnes, and of saluation, bicause they sinned not of purpose, but of ignorance. And it is lyke he had a respect vnto the prayers of Christ, which for this cause prayed for them that crucified him, saying: Father forgiue them, for they know not what they do. This place is diligently to be considered, to thintent we may learne what that ignorance is, whereby sinnes are mittigated and excused. For in the Scripture we finde two kinde of ignoraunces. The first is of those that be wicked, and openly rebell against God, which we may call a wilfull ignorance, bicause men will be ignorant of that they might know and learn. Example hereof we haue in Pharao, which sayeth he knoweth not God, notwithstanding long before he knew him by his wonders daily wrought, and desired his ministers to praye to God for him, and a little before his death, sayde: The God of the Hebrues fighteth against vs. See Exod. 5. and 14. Such was the ignoraunce of those Jewes, which when they had asked counsell of Ieremie, tolde him to his face they woulde not obey his worde. Such is the ignorance of a number in these dayes, which excuse their superstition with the cloke of ignorance, and saye they were none otherwise taught. And in the meane season refuse the truth offered them, will not heare it, flie them that would teach them, and stoppe their eares lyke serpents. This is an ignorance inexcusable, bicause it dammeth and stoppeth by the way to amendement. Yea, Christ testifieth that this is the condemnation of the worlde, that men flie the light, and wilfullye and wittinglye wrappe themselues in darkenesse, least their workes should be reprobued. There is another kinde of ignoraunce which springeth of a zeale of godlynesse, and the glozie of God, whereby men persecute the truth, not for the truthe sake, but bicause they thinke the glozy and worship of God is diminished thereby. It is lyke that many sinned through this ignorance against Christ, bicause they thought him an enemie of Moses, and the lawe, of the Temple, and of all the seruice appointed by God. And Paule seduced by a like zeale, persecuted the Church of Christ. And thereby he sayeth diuers of the Jewes offended. This ignoraunce is worthe of pardon, for none other cause, but for that it is contented to be corrected and amended, which if men refuse, then are they culpable of that first, and incurable kinde of ignorance. Let them marke well this difference, which now a dayes eyther flatter themselues or other men, vnder the pteence of ignorance. For it is euident that many offende of malice and frowardnesse.

Vnto these things he addeth an argument taken from the prouidence of God, for the better perswading them that they should be pardoned and saued. God (sayth he) which before had shewed by the mouth of all his Prophetes, howe Christ shoulde suffer, hath thus wise fulfilled. The strength of the argument is in this, that God bled their sinne to a good purpose, and that therefore they ought not to distrust the fauour of God. For it is as much as if he shoulde say: you can not nor ought not to denie but you haue committed an heynous offence. Howbeit you must not despayre therfore: but rather respect the ende wherevnto the great goodnesse of God hath directed all this your doing. Your meaning was to blot and wipe out all re-

Luke. 23.

Iere. 44.

Iohn. 3.

1. Tim. 1.

Phil. 3.

Rom. 10.

The prouidence of God comforteth sinners.

membraunce of Christ from amonge men. Bicause you thought he was an enimie to God and to true religion, ignoraunce blinded you, wherby it came to passe, that you were madde against the sonne of God. But the ende of all this tragedie was most ioyfull. For God by this meane (which thing no man euer hoped) hath fulfilled his eternall counsell of mannes redemption, and hath accomplished whatsoeuer in tymes passed was prophesied by the Prophetes. Why therfore shoulde you despaire of saluation which you heare is now obtained and gotten? Why shoulde you mistrust the goodnesse of God, which in your wickednesse as you see, hath bene so mercifull? Surely God will neuer cast you of, bicause of this your sinne, which he hath so ordered and directed to your commoditie, so that you refuse not his wisdom, which now is declared vnto you. We are hereby taught againe how we should vse the prouidence of God: not to seeke therein a defence for our wickednesse, but the instruction of our faith and life, and the comfort of our mindes. For the Apostle so quiteth not the Jewes, that he chargeth God with the murthering of Christ, but sheweth that God directed the Jewes fact, to a good ende and purpose. So if we or others offend, let vs acknowledge the fault to be in our selfe, and not so excuse our selues, to make God the authoz of our wickednesse. And if anye goodnesse fall out of our wickednesse, yet then let vs not thinke we be altogether faultlesse, but let vs embrace the goodnesse of God, which turneth the wickednesse, that deserued damnation, to our saluation. We alleaged an example hereof before in the hystorie of Ioseph, which was solde away by his brethren, to the which if you ioyne this example also, you shall as it were in a glasse behold all the reason of this controuersie and matter. Furthermore, let vs not harken to them, which saye we may sinne on hardy, seeing the glozve of God and our saluation, is aduanced by our sinning. For as Paule teacheth vs, we maye not doe euill that good may follow thereof. Nay, the more arguments we haue of Gods goodnesse toward vs, the more we ought to be sorie for our sinnes, and to obey the will of God. Let vs also here marke that we must not rashly iudge of other mens sinnes. They must be examined by the rule of Gods worde. We must not hastilye thunder out the sentence of damnation, bicause we doe not alwaye knowe the counsell of Gods prouidence, which perhaps vseth him whome we of priuate and to hastie affection, ment to condemne, to the furtheraunce and saluation of manye a man. See what is sayde of these iudgementes. Mathew. 7.

Roma. 3.

He giueth
them counsell
howe to be
saued.

Let vs now see the counsell that Peter giueth touching saluation, which he comprehendeth in fewe wordes, saying: Repent you and conuert, that your sinnes may be done away. This saying contayneth in it both a commaundement and a promise. The commaundement is the very same that he gaue to them before, that were pricked with the consideration of their sinnes. He vttereth one thing in two wordes. First, he commaundeth them to repent, which properly comprehendeth acknowledging of sinne, & contrition of hart. Whosoever will giue men counsel how they should be saued, he must beginne alwayes with these two things. For vlesse we acknowledge our sinnes, and be sorie for them: we shall neuer thinke of anye amendment and reconciliation with God. But bicause the wicked sometime acknowledge their sinne, and be sorie for them (as we see Iudas did) he

he addeth another worde, namely, that they must conuert. The conuersi-
on or turning must be vnto that thing, from which by sinne they departed
before. But that we depart from God by sinne, is more manifest than nee-
deth any great prowe of wordes. Therefore it is sayde in the Scriptures,
that sinners doe forsake the wayes of God. Therefore we must turne vn-
to God by repentance. And we conuert vnto God partly by amending our
life, and partly by faith in Iesus Christ. The one maketh vs to cease from
sinne, whereby we prouoked the wrath of God: the other indueth vs with
the righteousnesse of Christ, and maketh vs able to stande in his sight. For
the doctrine of the Gospell teacheth vs, that God the father is reconcyled
vnto vs by Christ. Of faith springeth the inuocation of God, and whatso-
euer other fruites ble to growe of repentance. Therefore Peter sheweth
the same waye of saluation here that he did before, which we must thinke
belongeth no lesse to vs, than to the Jewes. We are the shorter in this
place, bicause the things that might here be spoken, are sayd before, where
he may see more here of that listeth.

Vnto this precept or counsell, he addeth a promise, to moue them the
more. He promisseth them forgiveness of sinnes, wherof it is credible they
were chiefly carefull. But marke the maner of speech which he for great
cause and consideration vseth. Conuert (sayth he) that your sinnes maye bee
done away. He doth not attribute vnto them any glorie of merite or desert,
as though by workes of penance they might put awaye their sinnes, or
make satisfactiō for them. But teacheth them how they must be done away
by another, that is to saye by God, against whome we sinne, and by sinne
become debtors vnto him. For it is a Metaphore, or translation taken
from Creditors or lenders, who only haue power and authoritie to wype
debtes out of their booke of reckening, when eyther they are satisfied by
their debtors, or else themselues of fauour and goodnesse will remitte and
forgiue all the debt. And all they which sinne, become debtors vnto God,
according to that saying of Dauid. I haue sinned against thee, O Lorde. And
berily, whatsoeuer is committed against the will of the Lord, is sinne. Ther-
fore vnto God wyppen out the debtes of our sinnes, there can none other
deliuer vs from them. The wysest both of the Jewes and Gentiles, haue
hercin consented and agreed. For albeit the Gentiles attributed much to
their superstitions, yet they confessed they were in baine, vnto some pe-
culiar fauor of God were ioyned with them. Among the Jewes, the Pha-
risees attributed much to their workes: yet we read that they themselues
confessed openly, that God onely had power to forgiue sinnes. He forgi-
ueth them or putteth them awaye, not bicause it is in our power to purge
them, and to make satisfaction for them (for before him no fleche is iustifi-
ed, and all our righteousnesse be as an olde, worne, and ragged clothe,
which can neyther couer vs, nor keepe vs warme) but for that Iesus
Christ the sonne of God hath purged them vpon the aultar of the crosse,
by the merite of his death, and by the price of his bloude hath cancelled all
that, that hath made vs guiltie of death before God. The Lord in the same
sense vseth this translation of doing awaye or wypping out in Esay the Pro-
phete, cap. 43. and. 44. And Christ declareth all the maner hereof by a feate
Parable in the. xviij. of Mathew. Peter therefore admonisheth the Jewes
hereof, to thende they might vnderstande that their sinnes were now all

The remissi-
on of sinnes
is of free gift

Math. 9.

Psal. 143.
Isa. 64.

done

done awaye, so that they would with all their heart embrace Iesus Christ by whose merite they were put away. Nowe, that which is sayde to them, we must thinke spoken also to vs, who aboue all thinges must haue this care, that in our repentance we haue our eyes fast fixed vpon the onely forgiveness of our sinnes, that through to wicked and ouer bolde a confidence, we chalenge not to our selues, or to the merites of our workes, that benefite which commeth of the only grace of God obtayned by the merite of Christ.

He vrgeth
them by feare
of the last
iudgement.

Furthermore, as there is nothing more wholesome and necessary for man, than repentaunce and turning vnto God, wherevnto Peter in this place counselleth vs: so the flesh will credit and beleue anye thing, more easily than this. For such is the corruption of our nature, that we delight in sinne, and are so proude, that we are ashamed to confesse our fault, and to amende it. Therefore the Apostle vrgeth them standing wauering and in doubt, with most strong argumentes agreeable to this purpose. He setteth before their eyes the remembraunce of the later daye, and the glorious comming of Christ our Iudge. His talke or phrase herein is somewhat defectiue & not full, but may in this wise be easily supplied. It is not in vaine that I require you to repent and to turne vnto God. For the same shall be profitable and necessary for you, that you maye hereafter be able to stande sure, when the time of refreshinge, which we shall haue of the Lordes sight, commeth, and when he shall sende the same Iesus Christ which was before preached, whome the heauens must receyue, vntill the time that all things be restored againe. Out of the which wordes we may gather two argumentes. The one is taken of the time, the sense whereof is thus. This forme of the worlde shall not alway endure, neyther that trade of men and other creatures, that we now see. For there shall come a daye of refreshing and restoring of all things, when both the godly shall be deliuered, and restitution required of the wicked. &c. Therefore as your saluation is deare vnto you, so applie you busily that that day may bring vnto you refreshing and saluation, and not feare, and tormentes. The other argument he taketh of the Iudges person: God will sende this Iesus Christ, of whome we now speake, to be a Iudge, before whose iudgement seate all men must stande, that there they may receyue in their bodies according to all their doings whether they be good or badde. Is it not therefore necessarye that you shoulde get the fauour of this Iudge, before he come to punish you for your offences? It seemeth that a thirde argument also maye be gathered of these wordes, in that he sayth, he whome he now preached shall come to be a Iudge. For so he taketh from them all pretence of ignorance, that they shoulde not thinke they former ignorance shoulde excuse them in the daye of iudgement. And of such weyght are the thinges here spoken, that if the consideration of them can not moue any man, certes in vaine will he be moued with other argumentes.

The day of
refreshing.

Apoc. 21.

Here we haue to consider the state of the later daye, which Peter expresseth in two wordes. First he calleth it a daye of refreshing, by a figure called Synecdoche. This pertaineth only to the godly, which then shall feele refreshing, and be deliuered from all grieve and sorowe. Then shall God wpe away all teares from their eyes. And there shall be no more death, neyther sorrow, neyther crying. &c. Then also shall they be enriched with those
goodes,

goddes, which neyther eye hath seene, nor eare hearde, nor can be comprehended by any reason of man. Then as many as liued in the worlde, and suffered all kinde of griefes in the flesh patiently, shall (as Iobe sayth) see God in their flesh. For the which cause, Christ biddeth vs lift vp our heades when we see the signes going before the later daye: for then our redemption draweth neare. For the sight of Christ our Judge, can not be terrible to the godlye, forasmuch as they vnderstand that he is their Saniour and aduocate. And this is that great benefit that we haue by faith, and none otherwaies. For faith only maketh vs bolde and sure of saluation at the comming of Christ. Then shall they finde no helpe in riches, in honors, nor friendship of the worlde, which while they liued on earth, despised this sayth in Christ. Therfore it behooueth vs to be armed with this hope, against all the temptations of this worlde when we be in aduersitie, and so shall we neuer be remoued from the waye of saluation.

Then he calleth it a day of restitution: for then shall there be a restitution of all things, & a perfite and immutable state of creatures. Which many loke for in vaine as long as they liue in this worlde. For this worlde is full of confusion, and breedeth new troubles euery day wherewith the kingdome of Christ sometime hath bene so assaulted, & it might seme vtterly to haue quayled. But in the later day this kingdome shall be so set bp as the Prophetes haue prophesied. For when all the power of our aduersaries shall be brought vnder Christes fete, there shall be nothing moze to trouble the faithfull, and then shall be that ioyfull and peaceable state of all thinges, that the Prophetes many times make mention of. At that daye shall the bodie be restozed againe, howsoeuer they haue perished. For the sea shall giue vp hir deade, and so shall death and hell. There shall be restozed a ioyfull and blessed condicion of the worlde. And this engine and frame of the world that now groneth vnder the burthen of corruption, shal be deliuered, and made such as it was, before it was accursed for the sinne of man. For there shall bee newe heauens and a newe earth, wherein righteousnesse shall dwell. Every man shall receyue in his bodye according as he hath done, whether it be well or euill. Yea and Christ himselfe when he hath put downe all rule, and all things be subdued vnto him, shall be subiect vnto him that put all things vnder him, and shal deliuer vp the kingdome to God the father, that God may be all in all. To conclude, then shalbe such a restitution of all things, as we can now neyther vtter by wordes, nor comprehend by reason, for now we knowe our knowledge is vnperfite, and our prophesying vnperfite, but when that which is perfite is come, then that which is vnperfite shall be done away. Nowe we see in a glasse, euen in a darcke speaking: but then shall wee see face to face. In the meane while the consideration hereof serueth to our instruction, that we being bozne bp with the hope of this restitution, may patiently suffer whatsoever aduersitie and miserie, and so order our conuersation of life by faith in Christ, that that great daye of the Lord may bring vnto vs also comfort and refreshing among other that be godly.

And to many it seemeth a marueyle that the Lord deferreth his coming so long. And perhaps the Iewes might moue some question hereof. For where we measure God after the propertie of our flesh, we cannot chuse but marueyle at Gods tariaunce, and deferring of iudgement. But Peter answereth such questions, where he sayth, that Christ must remaine

in

Esay. 64.

Iohn. 19.

Luc. 21.

1. Iohn. 2.

The day of
restitution.

Esay. 9. 11.

Ierem. 23.

Amos. 9.

Apoc. 20.

Rom. 8.

Apoc. 21.

2. Pet. 3.

2. Cor. 5.

1. Cor. 15.

1. Cor. 13.

Why Christ
deferreth his
comming.

2. Theff. 2.
Apoc. 7.

Math. 24.

in the heauens, or reigne in heauen, vntill all things be restozed and fulfilled, that the Prophetes haue prophesied. He hath on the earth fulfilled the affaires of our redemption. But there remained as yet certaine things to be done, long before decreed by God and foretold. For it behoued the Gospell shoulde be preached in all the world, and that the Gentiles shoulde be brought into the fellowship of the Church, as all the Prophetes by one consent testifie. There remayned the myserie of Antichrist, through whose tyrannie it was needfull the Church shoulde be tried, and the number of Christes martyrs fulfilled. Christ therefore hath giuen a place to these things, by his going into heauen, hauing receyued all power in heauen and in earth. Let no man therefore thinke he is vnmindfull eyther of vs or of his dutie, bicause he deferreth his comming, and daye of iudgement. For he knoweth what he hath to doe in all thinges. Let it comfort vs that we knowe he reigneth in heauen. There let vs seeke him with mindes lift vp by faith, without any care of his corporall presence in earth, vntill that great daye come, when like a lightning he shall appeare vnto vs sodenly. Woulde to God they would diligently examine Peters wordes, which now a dayes bicause they would ratifie a bodily presence of Christ in the earth, saye that his humaine nature by reason of the coniunction it hath with the godly, is so extended and so pierceth through all places, that it cannot be circumscribed or conteyned neyther within time nor place. Let them therefore looke what answer to make to Peter, who appointeth to him both a time and a place. Yea, he affirmeth it is so appoynted of God, that he shoulde be taken into heauen, and shoulde sit there vntill that last daye came, when he shall returne to be a iudge, and to bestowe fully vpon the godlye the restitution long agoone promised. I knowe they iumble heauen and earth together, and by this worde heauen, vnderstande the heauenlye gloze and conuersation that he is in here on earth. But as this glose cannot be proued by scripture, so was it utterly vnknewe to the learned antiquitie, and therefore it needeth no great confutation. Therefore leauing their quiddities, let vs learne of this thirde part of the sermon, that in our sinnes we despaire not of Gods grace, but through repentance and true faith, let vs returne vnto God, and so let vs prepare our selues, that that daye on vs also may shine happie and ioyfull, when Iesus Christ shall come to deliuer those that be his, and to condemne the wicked: to whome be praise, honour, power and gloze for euer. Amen.

The. xxiiij. Homelie.

Moyse truly sayde vnto the fathers: A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise vp vnto you, euen of your brethren like vnto me: him shall you heare in all things whatsoever he shall saye vnto you. For the time will come that euerye soule which will not heare that same Prophete, shall bee destroyed from among the people. All the Prophets also from Samuell and thenceforth as many as haue spoken, haue in likewise tolde of these dayes.

After



After that the Apostle Peter had grieuouſlye accuſed the heynous wickedneſſe of the Jewes, which they committed againſt the ſonne of God, in the thirde part of his ſermon, he gaue them counſell howe to obteyne ſaluation, as we declared in our laſt Sermon. He bade them repent and conuert vnto God, which we partly doe by repentance, and partly by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, through whoſe merite we be reconciled vnto God. But it was no

ſmall blocke that kept the Jewes from embracing of Chriſt. For where they were not yet come to the knowledge of him, a great many feared that if they ſhoulde receyue him, they ſhoulde offende againſt Moyses, and the lawe giuen them from God. And it ſeemed a weightie matter to them, to forſake the religion which God had giuen vnto them, and which they had helde ſo many yeares after that order, and according as they receyued it of their forefathers. Therefore the Apoſtle in the fourth part of his oration correcteth this errour, teaching them that both Moyses and the Prophetes direct the true worſhippers of God vnto Chriſt, and that therefore they ſo little offended againſt the lawe, by believing in Chriſt, that rather they diſobey Moyses, and believe not the Prophetes truly, except they receyue Chriſt, of whome they beare witneſſe. Againe, leaſt they ſhoulde diſtruſt the goodneſſe of Chriſt, whome they nowe ſo oftentimes hearde they had offended by their great crueltie, he declareth that he that was promiſed to the fathers, belongeth to them alſo, and is their ſauour as well as the fathers, ſo that they woulde embrace him with true fayth. But at this preſent we will ſpeake but of thoſe thinges onely which Peter alledgeth concerning the myſterie of Chriſt, grounded vpon the bookeſ of the olde Teſtament.

He beginneth with Moyses, bicauſe he was of greateſt authoritie among the Jewes. Out of whome where he might haue brought diuers testi- monies, he taketh one among a manye, whereby he teacheth vs that Chriſt was long agoe appointed to be the teacher and ſcholemaſter of Gods people. Which thing ſerued much to this preſent purpoſe, bicauſe (as I ſaide euen nowe) many thought it a grieuous matter to forſake Moyses, who they knewe was appointed of God to be their lawmaker, and maiſter. He ſheweth therefore that it was not Moyses minde, that they ſhould alwaye hang vpon him, but that he pointed them to another Prophete, which ſhoulde more perfittely teache them all thinges. The place is in Deuteronomie. xviij. Chapter. In that place are prohibited all ſuperſtitious and ſoothſaying Artes of the heathen, whereby they go about to ſearch out the knowledge of thinges to come, and the ſecretes of God, by diuination, by the wicked Mathematicall, by the noiſe of birdes ſying, by Necromancie, and ſuch like kinde of diuinations. And Moyses doth aduertise them, that they ſhoulde forſake theſe thinges, and turne to the only worde of God, and wholly depend vpon the ſame. And bicauſe they ſhould not thinke it an harde matter to finde out the meaning of Gods word, he ſayth they ſhould neuer want Prophetes, whome God would raiſe vp from among themſelues, by whoſe miniſterie they ſhoulde learne what the will of God was

Moyſes be-
areth witneſſe
of Chriſt.

1. Pet. 1.

in all things they shoulde take in hande. And they are not deceyued which thinke that an vniuersall promise is conteyned in this place, whereby the gift of prophetic is established and confirmed in the people and Church of God. But Peter wittily applieth this generall promise vnto Christ, who, it is euident, is the chiefe of the Prophetes, and by whose spirite, as he sayth in another place, all the Prophetes were ledde and inspired. And that the things here spoken by Moyses belong vnto Christ, is moze euident than needeth anye long demonstration. For he was both borne of the Jewes, and was sent of God, as appeareth by his doctrine and myracles, whiche we see in all pointes conformable to the doctrine of the Apostles. Therefore Peters argument seemeth most strong, whereby he labourerth to perswade them to beleue in Christ, according to Moyses saying, euen as if he shoulde say: Moyses so little challengeth to him selfe alone all authoritie of teaching, that he commaundeth vs to giue eare and credite to euery Prophete, teaching the worde of God, and hath appointed all those that despise the Prophetes sayings, to be punished with death. Therefore, how much moze ought you to beleue Christ, who hath taught vs the will of God the father moze plainly and perfetely than anye man, and in whome most truly are verified whatsoeuer Moyses sayth of that Prophete. And so Peter trimly toucheth the ende and scope of his purpose, that is, to take out of their mindes that preposterous religion, which let and hindred them with the ouermuch reuerence of Moyses and the law, and their pieuist opinion, and woulde not let them to embrace Jesus Christ. Yet because both Peter and Steuen (as appeareth hereafter) expounde this place of Moyses, as ment of Christ: we also will here search out such thinges as maye instruct vs in the knowledge of Christ. And first of all, Moyses doth elegantly describe vnto vs Christ our sauour. Next, he teacheth vs what dutie we owe vnto him, and pronounceth sentence of death agaynst them that doe contemne him.

Christ in his
very man-
hode, is borne
of the Jewes

Heb. 2.

Rom. 9.

Genes. 3. 22

Psal. 132.

Esay. 11. &c

Christ is a
Prophete.

First, in the description of Christ, he sheweth of whome he shall spring, or be borne: The Lorde your God shall rayse him vp of your brethren. We must then be borne of the Jewes, which is an infallible argument of hys incarnation, and of his true manhode: whereby they are conuincied which saye Christ brought his flesh from heauen, and tooke it not of the substance of the virgin, but came through the virgin into the worlde, as water runneth through a conduite. Verily Paule testifieth that he tooke not on him the aungels nature, or any heauenly creatures, but the seede of Abraham. And speaking of the prerogatiues of the Jewes, wherewith God aboue other nations did bouchsafe to endue them, among other things he maketh mention howe Christ touching the fleche, shoulde be borne of them, which is God in all things to be prayesed for euer. Wherevnto the promises of the olde Testament, are to be referred, where often times he is called one whyle the seede of the woman, another whyle the seede of Abraham and of David. We must here obserue the singular goodnesse of God, who hauing appointed his sonne to be our sauour and teacher, woulde haue the same incarnated and made man, least eyther we might be afrayde of his maiestie, or thinke he disdained our infirmitie, which Paule also considered. Heb. 2. &c. 4.

Secondly, he declareth the office of Christ, calling him a Prophete. Howbeit Moyses was not ignozant that Christ should be both a King, and the

the Redemer of mankinde, and denyeth it not in this place, but maketh mention of his office, which for his purpose and matter in hand, was chiefly to be required. Prophetes whether they shewe of things to come, or else by the worde of God admonish men of things present, are the interpreters and openers of Gods will. But bicause Christ shoulde be a Priest in the Church of God for euer, he must not abstayne from teaching, which is the chiefe poynt required in a Priest, as maye be sene Malachie.2. Wherefore also in another place, he is described in the person of a Prophete or preacher, as in Esay.61. Which place he himselfe expoundeth of himselfe in the sinagoge at Nazareth. And he is not declared to be such an one in the olde Testament only, but God hath set him forth also being here on earth, by a very solemne and open authorisement, to be the vniuersall and vndoubted teacher of all the worlde. Whereas vpon mount Thabor before most credible witnesses both of the deade and of the liuing, that is to saye, before Moyse and Elias, Peter, Iames, and Iohn, he pronounced that notable saying: This is my beloued sonne, in whome I am well pleased, heare him. And Christ himselfe followed the office of teaching with great studie and diligence, and openly confesseth that he was sent for that cause. Therefore it is not without a cause that Moyse and Peter calleth him a Prophet. And we are taught by this place, that it is not sufficient if we confesse Christ to be our sauour and Redemer, vnlesse we acknowledge him to be a teacher sent of God, and doe that dutie to him that schollers owe to a faythfull and trustie schoolemaister. Thou shalt moreouer consider, howe we ought to reuerence the ministerie, whereby the Gospell is preached. For whereby can it more singularly be commended, than by the example of the sonne of God, who both himselfe was a minister on the earth, and appoynted the ministerie to be alwaye in his Church, wherevnto Paule hauing a respect, sayth: that wee be messengers in the roume of Christ, and preache vnto the worlde the worde of attonement. Which woulde God both the hearers and ministers woulde alwaye remember, least the one sort thinke to contemptuously of the ministerie, and the other through their naughtynesse make it to be laughed at.

Thirdly is declared what maner a Prophete Christ should be: to saye like vnto Moyse. Which is not so to be taken, as though we shoulde acknowledge in Christ nothing of more excellencie than in Moyse, whereas Moyse was but a meere man and a sinner, and Christ was both God and man, & the authoz of our saluation. But this similitude or comparison must be referred to the office of a Prophete, and figure of Christ which Moyse bare: wherein many things both pleasant and profitable come to be considered. First Paule testifieth of Moyse that he had rather to suffer sorowe and affliction with the people of God, than to be taken for Pharaos displeasure, and enioye the treasures and delightes of Egypt. The same affection we see in Christ, who being in the shape of God, humbled and abased himselfe, and taking on him the shape of a seruaunt, chose rather to be afflicted with vs, and to die for vs, than to see vs any longer in misery. Furthermore, as Moyse was of his brethren moste vnworthily refused: so when Christ came amongst his owne, his owne receyued him not, and before Pylate they denyed him saying: wee haue no king but Caesar. Yea, and now a dayes also he is most vnworthily reiecte of manye, to whome he

Luc.4.

Math.17.

Mar.1.

Luc.4.

Christ is like
vnto Moyse

Heb.11.

Iohn.1.19.

Psal. 24.
Iohn. 10.

Exod. 20.
Deut. 5.

Iohn. 1. 15.

2. Cor. 10.
Rom. 1.

Exod. 32. 33.
Num. 11. 12.

Galat. 3.

1. Tim. 2.
1. Iohn. 2.

We owe to
Christ faith
and obedience

offreth himselfe, and in himselfe eternall life and saluation through the Gospel. Thirdly, as Moyse deliuered the people of God from the cruell tyrannie of Pharao, brought them out of Egypt, and drowned them in the surges of the read sea: so the sonne of God hath deliuered mankinde from the power of the deuill, and bursting the bondes of sinne and death, hath slayne Satan the spirituall Pharao, with all his preparation, engines and armor, through the merite of his bloude. Fourthly, as Moyse lyke a faithfull shephearde, ledde the people of Israell safely through the unknowne wayes of the wilderness: so Jesus Christ is that faithfull shepheerde that goeth before his shepe, and leadeth vs safely through the deserte of this worlde, being full of all kinde of daungers, by the light of his worde, and guiding of his spirite. Fifthly, as Moyse gaue Manna to the people being an hungred, and gat springes of water out of the rocke for them, being a thirst: so Jesus Christ feedeth our soules vnto life euerlasting by the merite of his flesh, & hath opened in his side a most plentiful fountaine of saluation, by the which only al thirly drouthes of the soule are quenched. See Iohn. 6. 4. 7. 19. Sixthly, as Moyse was the interpretoz of Gods worde to the people, when they were not able to abide the maiestie of God speaking to them: so where none of vs hath seene God, nor can see him as long as we be clothed with this mortall flethe, the sonne of God which is in the bosome of his father, hath declared vnto vs, whatsoeuer behoueth vs to knowe of God, and proueth by that argument that he taketh vs for his friendes, bicause he hath hid none of these things from vs, which he heard of his father. Seuently, as all the weyghtie causes which coulde not be discussed by the ordinarie Judges, vsed to be referred and brought vnto Moyse, and he receyuing sentence from the mouth of the Lorde, declared it, and that was taken for vndoubted, and ought not to be countermanded, as may be seene Exod. 18. and. 33. Leuit. 24. Numer. 15. &c. so whatsoeuer things eyther in the mysteries of faith and kingdome of heauen, or in the conuersation of our whole lyfe passe the capacite of our reason, it behoueth they be referred to Christ onely, and we must stand to his sentence, so that we must subdue all our vnderstanding to the obedience of faith, which Paule testifieth, is the end and scope of the Gospel. Eightly, as Moyse alwaye made intercession to God for the people, as oft as they sinned, and did it so faithfullye, that for their sakes he desired to be topped out of the booke of God: So Christ when the sentence of damnation hong ouer all our heades, made intreatie for vs, and woulde become accursed for vs, to deliuer vs from the curse. The same also being made a mediatour betwene God and man, maketh alwayes intercession for vs to the father: And as manye as feele they haue deserued Gods wrath through their sinnes, must vse him for their aduocate and spokesman vnto God. Many other things might be alleaged, in the which it is manifest Christ was like vnto Moyse, or rather an absolute and perfite accomplisher of those things which by Moyse were prefigured. But it sufficeth to giue occasion to them that list moze deeply and exactly to search them.

Now, vnto this description of Christ, he ioyneth what the dutie is that we owe him, for Moyse saith: him shal you heare in al things whatsoeuer he saith to you. The same, God the father commaunded vpon the hill of Thabor, as we declared a little before, saying: Heare him. Yet let no man thinke he hath

fulfilled

fulfilled the commaundement of God, if he receiue the word of God but into his eares, as Iudas and the Phariseyes, Pylate and many others did. But first an earnest desire of the Gospell is required, bicause among manye thinges whereabout men be most vainly occupied, one thing is necessary, as Christ teacheth vs. From the studie of the worde the beliefe which we haue in it cannot be seclued. For howe can we labour to get that thing, the credit and truth whereof we suspect: Obedience followeth beliefe, where by we acknowledge Christ to be the teacher of sayth, religion, and director of our whole life, and to our power obey him. These markes of the children of God did he teach vs, where he sayth: He that is of God heareth the wordes of God. Agayne: My sheepe heare my voyce, and follow me. Where vpon we gather for a suretie, that they be not the children of God, nor the sheepe of Christ, which refuse to heare Christes voyce, speaking in the Gospell. Aboue all thinges we must note that whatsoeuer Christ speaketh, we are commaunded to heare it. For there be which heare Christ in deede, but they heare him but in those thinges only which like their fleshlye appetyte, against the which, if anye thing be spoken, they thinke that apperteyneth not vnto them. Of this number be they, which gladly heare, and marueylously embrace the promises of the Gospell, where the grace of God is preached, and free forgiveness of sinnes: but the same will not admit the doctrine of repentaunce which rebuketh and accuseth sinne. They be like vnto those which after a sort can suffer the doctrine of truth to be preached, but cannot abyde if a man reprocue the deceyuers, and Antichristes. And we see many so affected, that they will greatly extoll and commende whatsoeuer is spoken of the kingdome of Christ, of his victorie, of the glorie of the elect, which they shall possesse in heauen: but yet they so abhorre the crosse & persecutions, that they can suffer no mentions to be made thereof. But these men are farre decepted. For Christ is not deuided, neyther can the parts of Christ his doctrine be separated. For he that commaunded forgiveness of sinnes to be preached in his name, the same requireth all men likewise to repent. And he that sayde to the woman that was a sinner and bewayled hir sinnes: Thy sinnes be forgiven thee: The same sayd vnto him that was sicke of the Palsey being now healed: Beholde, thou art made whole: sinne not againe heereafter, least a worse thing happen vnto thee. And afterwarde he sayde by Paule, that whoremongers and adulterers without repentance, shoulde not enter into the kingdome of God. Likewise, he that confesseth himselfe to be the light and the truth, and biddeth vs to walke in him: the same reprooeth false Christes and Antichristes, and biddeth vs beware of them. Againe, he that promisseth the treasures of heauen to those that be his: the same affirmeth constantly, that in the world they shall suffer tribulation. And he that gloriously rose from the dead, and with great triumph was taken vppe into heauen, a little before that, was despitefully hanged betwene two theues. Therfore as we must embrace whole Christ: so is it necessary that we giue eare to his whole doctrine, vntlesse we will wholly be depriued of him. A figure hereof went before in the Paschall lambe, which the Jewes were commaunded to eate whole, and the bones and other thinges which coulde not be eaten, were commaunded to be burned. So must whole Christ be receyued, and if anye thing seeme in him vntollerable, that same must be consumed and overpassed with the

fire

Luke. 10.

Iohn. 8.

Iohn. 10.

Luc. 24.

Luc. 7.

Iohn. 5.

1. Cor. 6.

Math. 7. 24

Iohn. 15. 16

The punish-
ment of those
that contemne
Christ.

Heb. 10.

Iohn. 3.

Marc. 16.

The Pro-
phetes beare
witness of
Christ.

2. Sam. 7.

fire of sayth and loue of God.

Furthermore, bicause our fleshe herein maketh much resistance, which very vnwillinglye cometh to this yoke: Moyses bygeth vs with grieuous menace and threatening: It will come to passe (sayeth he) that euerye soule that will not heare that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among that people. This punishment comprehendeth the whole destruction of man, both body and soule. For what hope of saluation can remayne for him, which is secluded and cut of from the Church & people of God, which only is receyued into the fellowship and communion of all Gods goodnesse. But why shoulde he not be reiected from the fellowship of him, which refuseth to heare him whome God hath appoynted to be his maister, and the teacher of his whole Church: How much more grieuous punishment doth he deserue, which dare treade the sonne of God vnder his fete: Hereof are taken those heauye threatens in the Gospell, which seeme to manye too vehement, and more cruell than reason woulde, such as is that saying of the Baptist: He that beleeueth not the sonne, shall not see lyfe, and the wrath of God abideth vpon him. And Christ when he had promysed eternall life to the beleeuers, addeth: He that will not beleeue shall be condemned. But Peter thought to admonishe the Jewes hereof, bicause they should not thinke the contempt of Christ and his Gospell to be a game and pastime, but shoulde knowe that the daunger of their soule laye thereon. And let vs thinke the same is sayde vnto vs. For such is the authoritie of Iesus Christ with his father, that no man can be accepted and welcome to him, except he be grafted in Christ. But the bare and emptye profession of a Christian name grasseth vs not in him, but a liuely faith, which maketh vs to obey his doctrine, and firmly to beleeue in him. See what is said of the true and counterfeite hearers of Christ, Math. 7. and Luc. 6. Chapters.

Although the authoritie of Moyses was great with the Jewes: yet bicause Peter will omit nothing, he ioyneth hereto testimonies of the Prophetes, diuers of the which it is like he rehearsed. But here he taketh all, saying: All the Prophetes from Samuell, and thencefoorth as manye as haue spoken, haue tolde of these dayes. He beginneth the number of the Prophetes with Samuel, bicause before him was no Prophete after Moyses, whose writings are extant. Yea, before he prophecied, the worde of the Lorde was a rare and precious thing, as we reade 1. Samuel. 3. Which afterwarde by many Prophetes began most clearly, both to be preached, and written euery where. And as many as were from that time, haue prophecied of Iesus Christ, as may plainly appeare to all them which haue reade their sermons or bookes with diligence. It is a plaine and manifest oracle of God that Nathan telleth to Dauid of Christ, which should be borne of his stocke. There are manye other more euident than this, vttered by Dauid, such as appeare. Psalm. 2. 22. 89. 119. &c. Of Esaye, what neede we to speake, which hath written so playne an hystorie of all the thinges which Christ shoulde doe, that (as S. Ierome sayth) he deserueth in many places to be taken for an Euangelist, rather than a Prophete. The lyke is to be affirmed of all the other Prophetes, whose sayings if we should rehearce worde by worde, we might swoner finde howe to beginne, than to make an ende. Let it suffice to tell you that there is no so small a thing in Christ, but the same may be proued by the oracles of the olde Testament, where

whereupon we also gather, that the booke of the olde Testament ought not to be condemned, as certayne phanaticall persons affirme, which crye they belong onelye to the Jewes. They sinne agaynst the industrie and goodnesse of God, which thought good all manner of wayes to confirme our saluation.

Therefore let vs marke here both the certaintie of the doctrine of the Gospell, and Christian faith, and also the antiquitie therof: for if we ioyne vnto the testimonies of Moyses and the Prophetes, the figures of the lawe, and the auncient promises made long before to the Patriarches, a man shall easily perceyue that there was neuer anye kinde of doctrine or religion, confirmed and set forth with so many testimonies. The first standeth vpon the promise, which was made in Paradise to our first parents, concerning the seede of the woman, which shoulde treade downe the serpens heade. Therefore great is the folly or rashnesse of them (to speake no worse) which eyther openly dare gaine say the doctrine of the Gospell, or else seeke other counsellers, by authoritie whereof, to determine and rule our fayth, and religion. For what doe these men else, but reprove God which spake by Moyses and the Prophetes, of lying, or at leastwise call his truth in doubt: Besides, they foolishly require the authoritie of men, whereas we ought not to beleue an Angell teaching the contrary. Therefore letting them go, let vs embrace Christ, whome one vniforme consent of Scripture setteth out to vs, in whome only all righteousnesse, sanctification, truth, and saluation is conteyned. To him be prayse, honour, glory and power for ever. Amen.

The certaintie and antiquitie of the Christian fayth.

Galat. 3.

The. xxv. Homelie.

Ye are the children of the prophetes, and of the couenant which God made vnto our fathers, saying to Abraham: Euen in thy seede shall all the kinreds of the earth bee blessed. First when God had raysed vp his sonne Iesus vnto you, he sent him to blesse you, that euery one of you shoulde turne from his wickednesse.



The Apostle Peter so sheweth the Jewes the way and meane vnto saluation, that therewith also he remoueth all impedimentes which myght lette them from taking that waye: where we had two things chiefly to consider. The first was the preposterous obseruance of Moyses, and their auncestries religion. For they feared if they embraced Christ, they shoulde offende agaynst the lawe and religion which God gaue vnto their forefathers. He teacheth them therefore that therein is no daunger, because both Moyses and the Prophetes directed and sent men vnto Christ. But that they rather offended against Moyses which disdayned to receiue Christ, whereas Moyses long before appointed that such as they were, shoulde be punished by death. There was yet one other stoppe, which was the conscience of that sinne which they had committed agaynst Christ. For where they had wickedly denied him (as Peter before tolde them) they sawe it was meete and conuenient, that Christ also should

denye

Esay. 1.

The order of
preaching the
Gospel.

Math. 11.

Iohn. 3.

Iohn. 17.

1. Iohn. 2.

The Jewes
are the chil-
dren of the
Prophetes.

Psal. 105.

Math. 3.
Iohn. 8.

denye and forsake them, and not regarde or accept their repentaunce. And they coulde not be ignozant howe God by his Prophete reiecteth the pray-ers of such as woulde holde by handes vnto him, embzued with bloude. Wherefore Peter in this place remedyeth this inconuenience, and proueth by strong argumentes that Iesus Christ appertayneth to them also, and will not put them backe, if they will turne vnto him with all their hearts: which is the principall state and subiect of this place, wherewith also he concludeth his sermon with very good successe.

Before we enter into Peters wordes, we haue an example in him to marke, which teacheth vs the right trade howe to preach the Gospel: That consisteth herein to make all men vnderstand how the promises of the gospel appertaine vnto them. For vnlesse they be hereof assured, they neither can make great account of them, ne yet surely trust vnto them. Which thing is the cause that Paule is so diligent in prouing the vocation of the Gentyles. For in vaine shoulde the Gospel haue bene preached to them, except they had knowne y^e the saluation purchased by Christ, had aswell belonged to them as to the Jewes. For this cause all the promises of the Gospel, are vniuersall, and may be applied to all men, which with true sayth will embrace them. Come vnto me (sayth Christ) all ye that labour and are heauie laden. &c. So God loued the worlde, that he gaue his onely begotten sonne for vs, to thende that all that beleue in him shoulde not perishe but haue lyfe euerlasting. And in another place he sayth, that he prayeth for all them that shoulde beleue in him through the preaching of the Apostles. Wherevnto also is to be referred that that Iohn sayth, that is, howe all they which are sinners, haue Christ for their aduocate, bicause hee hath giuen himselfe an atonement for the sinnes of all the worlde. And Paule oftentimes in the businesse of saluation excludeth all respect of persons, and testifieth that all they that beleue in Christ, haue saluation giuen them of God in him. See Rom. 10. Galat. 3. Colof. 3. Ministers must so minde and remember these things, that they must debarre no man from the vniuersall promises of God, but must so deuide and order the word of the Gospel, that no man may doubt of the certaintie of his saluation, but maye vnderstande that the merite of Christ belongeth to them all indifferently. Now, after these premisses, let vs come to Peters saying, which with thre arguments most strongly confirmeth the Jewes sayth.

First, he admonisheth them of their auncient dignitie, and of their elders, saying: you be the children of the Prophetes: that is to say, you come of that people or nation, of whome the Prophetes came. Or rather, you be the children of the Patriarches, who, it is euident were most notable Prophetes, as by whome the promises of saluation were declared first vnto mankind. For the which cause the holy ghost long agoe called them Prophetes. Hereof Peter gathereth, that without doubt the promises long before reuealed by the Prophetes, appertaine to the nation of the Jewes: if so be they will receyue them, and imitate the sayth of their progenitors. For Peter in this place doth attribute nothing here to carnall generation: which is of no effect in those that degenerate, and ware wicked, as those graue exhortations of Iohn the Baptist and Christ doe plainly declare, where they seuerely and earnestly rebuke the Jewes glozyng in the bare title of Abraham. But Peter by this argument confirmeth those that might

dupaire,

dispaire, to the entent they might vnderstande their traueyle should not be in vaine, if they woulde follow their fathers the Prophetes, and embrace Christ the Saviour, whome they foretolde was to come.

Marke how Peter going about to perswade the Jewes to hope for saluation, first maketh mention of the Prophetes. He knewe therefore that this was the chiefe argument of Gods fauour toward vs, to giue vs expositors of his will, because that except we perfectly knew it, we could not attaine vnto saluation. Therefore among the benefites of the olde testament, which God in time bestowed on his people, this is chiefly to be remembered, that he furnished them with Prophetes, by whome they might be taught the will of God. See Mich. 6. Amos. 2. Psal. 107. 2. Paral. 36. Yea, Christ himselfe by this argument proueth that he took the Apostles for his friendes, because he hid none of those thinges from them, which were shewed to him of his father. Whereof we gather howe great the ingratitude and wickednesse of them is, which dare contemne the worde of God, and hisse at the Prophets, by whose ministerie the same is preached. They shall one daye feele the sentence of Christ, when he most seuerely reuenge the contempt of his seruants, as he threateneth Math. 10.

Secondly, he calleth to their remembrance the vocation of the Jewes, and promise of God, alleaging the couenaunt or testament of God, made in the time past with Abraham. You (sayeth he) are the children of the couenant, which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham: Euen in thy seede shall all the kinreds of the earth be blessed. He saimeth by an Hebrew phrase to call them the children of the Testament, to whom the Testament belonged, and which were Heires written in the Testament of God. For so we reade they are called the children of wrath, or death, whome God in his wrath appointeth to death. Peter saimeth to make two argumentes. The first is of a thinge before denounced or shewed, saying: God in the Testament which he made with your fathers hath written you for heyres also. Ergo, the saluation containd in the Testament of God, belongeth as well to you as to the fathers. The Antecedent needed no great prooffe, with those who knewe the promise of God well ynough: I will be thy God, and the God of thy seede after thee. Then alleaging the summe and effect of the Testament, he proueth by an argument a comparatis, that is, of things compared or layde together, that they cannot be excluded from the promises. For thus God testified to their father Abraham, that in his seede all the Nations of the earth shoulde be blessed. And if the Testament of God extended to forreine Nations, who I pray you will denye that it appertayneth to them that be borne of the stocke of Abraham? Yet let vs allwaye remember that Peter speaketh these things conditionally, and that saluation is promised to them which (by the faith that was in Abraham) take holde of Christ, least we attribute vnto carnall generation, that which dependeth vpon the mere grace of God, and his free election, as Paule at large proueth to the Romaines, the. ix. Chapter.

By this place may the madnesse of the Anabaptistes be confuted, which will not admit the children borne of the faythfull into the societie and fellowship of Christes Church, yet none of vs denie but that saluation standeth in Goddes election, and not in carnall generation. In the meane whyle where as God in his Testament hath longe since included the chil-

The Jewes
are the chil-
dren of the
couenant.

A pronun-
ciatis.

Gene. 17.

A comparatis.

Against the
Anabaptists.

Gene. 17.

Math. 18. 19

Marc. 10.

1. Cor. 7.

Our saluati-
on is contey-
ned in the te-
stament of
God.

Heb. 6.

Galat. 3.

Roma. 11.

Esay. 49.

The summe
of the Testa-
ment of God.

A blessing.

Rom. 3. 5.

children of the faithful: it may seeme great rashnesse to denye them the communion of the Testament and Church of God. Shall we thinke the conditions of the new Testament more hard and grievous for our children, than the olde were, when by Circumcision the eighth day they were taken into the fellowship of the people of God? Or shall the authoritie of Christ be of no force with vs, which attributeth faith to little children, and affirmeth that the kingdome of heauen pertaineth to them? Or what shall we saye to Paule, which speaking of unlike marriages, feareth not to call those children holy, which haue but one parent onely, be it father or mother that is a Christian? Let vs therefore auoyde the headye audacitie of our iudgement, and constantly keepe the articles of Gods couenant, where it is manifest, that saluation is promised euen to very children.

It is diligently to be considered that God woulde haue our redemption and saluation comprised in a couenant or Testament. Which thing as it begon in Abraham, so was it afterwarde many times renewed with Abrahams posteritie & offspring. Hereto appertayne the things spoken by Dauid. Psal. 89. and. 132. and also the things we read in Ieremy. 31. touching the new Testament of God. And God did not onely make a Testament, but confirmed the same with an othe. For he swore vnto Abraham, and that by himselfe, because he coulde sweare by no greater. These thinges serue to proue the certaintie of our saluation. For if no man reiect or breake a mans testament, after it is engrossed & lawfully proued, then none hath so much authoritie, as to infringe or violate the Testament of God. For Paule saith, the gifts of God are without repentance, and his calling cannot be broken. God affirmeth the same Ieremie the. 33. saying: If the couenant which I haue made with daye and night may be broken, that there shoulde not be daye and night in due season: then maye my couenant also be broken, which I made with Dauid my seruant. &c. And in another place he sayeth, that the naturall affections of the parents toward their children, be not so sure and vehement, as the care he hath to keepe the truth of his Testament, and the certaintie of our saluation.

It shall be profitable to marke diligentely the summe of Gods Testament, which is alleaged by Peter out of the. xxiij. chap. of Genesis. In thy seede (sayth God vnto Abraham) shall all the kindredes of the earth bee blessed. In which wordes God comprehendeth thre thinges. First, he sheweth what profite commeth to vs by his Testament. Secondly, he declareth the mediator, by whome we shall receyue it. Thirdly, he teacheth to whome the inheritance of this Testament is to be extended.

First, God promiset a blessing, which is set agaynst the curse, as appeareth in Deut. 27. and. 28. This blessing comprehendeth in it the whole and entire safetie of man, and specially the fauour of God which enricheth vs with all kinde of goodes. For it cannot be that he can want either in body or soule, that hath God fauourable and mercifull to him. And it behoued this thing should expressly be promised vs, because by nature, as many as are of the stocke of Adam, are accursed. For the Scripture euerywhere teacheth that the curse belongeth vnto sinne. And the lawe pronounceth him accursed, which fulfilleth not all the things that God commaundeth. Deut. 27. Therfore because we be all sinners, and destitute of the glozy and grace of God, we be subiect to his wrath and iudgement. And as thzough

time

sinne all kinde of euill is come into the worlde, so God by blessing promisseth all goodnesse. Therefore this is a most large promise, and comprehendeth all mannes saluation.

And bicause enmitie was growne betwene God and vs, by reason of sinne: we coulde not be reconciled vnto him without a Mediator, nor attayne vnto this blessing. God therefore sheweth vs this mediator, where he promisseth the blessing in the seede of Abraham. Which place Paule the Apostle with great plainnesse expoundeth of Iesus Christ, who wee reade took the seede of Abraham. For he writeth to the Galathians the third chapter: To Abraham were the promises made, and to his seede. He sayth not, and in his seedes, as of many, but in thy seede, as of one, which is Christ. Neyther doe we here regarde the rauilling Jewes, which expounde this worde seede (bicause it is a nowne collective) of the whole nation of the Jewes, and make a comparison, as though all people shoulde be blessed after the example of that nation. For where it is euident all mankind standeth accursed, Gods Testament shoulde be of no profite, vnlesse he appoynted some one which shoulde blesse them and deliuer them from the curse. But who that is, the Jewes can neuer shewe vs, if they refuse Christ, forasmuch as in al Abrahams posteritie, many and great sinnes may be shewed. Whereby it is euident the curse cleaueth to them. For the Lorde truly sayd to them by Esaias. Thy first father offended sore, and thy Rulers haue sinned against me. Onely Christ is he, in whose mouth was founde no guile, and which was able to save to his enemies: which of you can reprove or impeach me of sinne. And he only is declared by God the father to be that man in whome we obtayne this blessing. For of him God sayde: This is my beloued sonne, in whome I am well pleased. And he in his last supper openly testified, that the accomplishing of the newe Testament consisted in his bloude. Through his bloude therefore be our sinnes purged, which caused the sentence of malediction to fall vpon vs. Whosoener therefore will obtaine the inheritance of blisse, let them embrace Christ.

Howbeit, bicause this blisse or felicitie shall not seeme to pertayne to a fewe persons, or to one Nation only: he sheweth expressly howe farre it ought to be extended, including within the blessing that cometh by Christ, all the kinredes of the earth. For (as Paule sayeth) he that ordeyned these things, is not the God of the Iewes only, but of all Nations also. And we are euerywhere warned, that touching our saluation there is no difference of nations before God, but (as Peter afterward testifieth) in all people they that feare him, and worke righteousness, are accepted with him. Further, Christ himselfe sayth, that the saluation, whereof he is authoꝝ, appertayneth to all men, where he testifieth in the Gospell, that many shall come from the East, and from the West, and rest with Abraham, Isaac, & Iacob, in the kingdome of heauen. Wherunto this also appertaineth, where he giueth comaundement to his Apostles to preach the gospell ouer all the world, Marc. 16. Act. 1. For as the first promise of saluation was made to our first parentes: so God woulde haue the same imparted to all their issue and posteritie. Neyther is there any other reason wherefore Abraham can be called the father of many Nations, but for that all the faithfull of all nations ioyned together in Iesus Christ, are made heyres of the promises of his sonne, and of the saluation set forth in Christ, by faith. The consideration herof is both full

Christ is the mediator of blisse.

Esay. 43.

Math. 3. 17.

1. Cor. 11.

The heires of blisse.

Rom. 3.

Actes. 10.

Math. 8.

of instruction and comfort. For it teacheth vs that we must rashly contemne no man, nor yet be proude of the vaine prerogative of our nation, which most times dependeth of earthly men, and of their fonde iudgement: for as much as Jesus Christ which is our saluation and glozy, apperteyneth to all nations. Againe, it confirmeth vs in the temptations of our fayth, that we suffer not our selues to be seclued from Christ, in whome we heare that all the nations of the earth be blessed: by which argument Peter labourereth here to perswade the Jewes the certaintie of their saluation.

Christ is first
sent to the
Jewes.

Thirde, he comforteth them with the late benefite of God, and the present state and condicion of things. First, when God raysed vp his sonne Iesus vnto you, he sent him to blesse you, that euerye one of you shoulde turne from his wickednesse. He vnderstandeth not by this worde raysing vp, the resurrection of Christ from death, but he alludeth vnto the oracle of Moyses, which a little before, he cited. As though he should say: God hath performed that he promised, and hath raised vp that great Prophete and redeemer of mankind, one of your owne brethren. And he hath sent him being thus raysed vp and incarnated, not to other nations, but vnto you, and willed him first to notifie & intreate of saluation among you. Neither can any man denye this. For Christ taught among you: he wrought miracles among you: he bled himselfe conuersantly with you: yea, he plainly confesseth that he chiefely belongeth to the lost sheepe of Israel. Furthermore, when he first sent vs forth to preache, he badde vs we shoulde keepe our selues within the boundes and borders of your nation, and not to goe into the way of the Gentiles. And his last commaundement when he was ready to ascende into heaven was, that we shoulde beginne to preache the Gospell first at Jerusalem, and so to publishe it throughout Iurie, and then to bring it to other nations. Wherefore, you haue no iust cause to doubt, but lesse you list to despise the present grace of God, and to doubt of these things which God (little lacking) offreth to you to faele with your handes. Howbeit, he bequileth not men with vaine promises, he mocketh vs not with emptie bragges of benefites; but hath a pleasure to giue vs them in dede, and taketh no greater delight than in our saluation. We are here taught howe we also maye assure vs of our saluation by the preaching of the Gospell. For where it is the message of saluation, God truly offreth saluation to them, whome he calleth thereby into the knowledge and fellowship of his sonne. Neyther is there now a dayes any other way or meane, by the which God sendeth his sonne vnto vs, than by preaching the gospell which fully comprehendeth all the blisse of saluation.

Math. 15.

Math. 10.

Actes. 1.

The office of
Christ.

Nowe, Peter in fewe wordes describeth the office of Christ, where he sayth he is sent of God to blesse vs. Whereby also we perceyue that by the seede of Abraham, he vnderstode none other but Christ, as before out of Paule we declared. Christ blesseth vs as he is a Priest. For it was the Priestes office to blesse the people, as Moyses teacheth Numer. 6. Although there is great difference betwene them & Christ, for they were ministers only of the figure and shadowe. Christ doth not only wishe vs good, but also giueth it, and in him God blesseth vs with all spirituall blessing, as Paule teacheth Ephe. 1. But Peter addeth the maner also of this blessing, saying: whyle he turneth euery man from his wickednesse. For where, of sinnes the curse springeth, there can be no place for blessing, afore sinne be taken a-

waye.

waie. Nowe Christ taketh them awaye: yea, he hath long sithence clen-
sed them by the merite of his death: for which cause the Baptist calleth him
the lambe of God that taketh awaye the sinnes of the worlde. He taketh not
sinne awaye for one time only, but conuerteth all them fro their sinnes that
belæue in him. For where he giueth them his spirite, they be regenerated
and renewed by him: so that they which before were giuen to the bondage
of sinne, doe cast of the yoke of sinne, and liue vnto God, and beginne to
serue him, in studie of innocencie, and charitie. Whereby we gather, that
they are greatly deceyued, which imagine Christ to be a patrone of carnall
libertie, and saye that by preaching of him, we plant carelesse lyfe in the
minde of men. Certainlye, Christ came into the worlde to destroye the
workes of the deuill. But among these workes, sinne hath the chiefe place
as there is none that can denie. Nay rather, if we will confesse the truth,
there can be in vs no true turning from sinne, but such as Christ is authoz
of, through his spirite, according to that saying of Ieremie: Conuert thou
me, and I shall be conuerted. Agayne: Turne thou vs vnto thee (O Lord) and
so shall we be turned.

Iohn. 1.

1. Iohn. 3.

Ierem. 31.

Thren. 5.

Furthermore, before we make an ende, we haue to be obserued, that the
Iewes abounding in so many prerogatiues & dignities as both here and
else where are declared in the. ix. to the Romaines, receiued no comodity by
any of them all, but were forsaken of God, for that through stubborne incre-
dulitie, they contemned Christ, and despised the preaching of the gospel,
whereof Paule intreateth at large Rom. 11. Therefore all externe things are
but vaine, except we embrace Christ with true fayth, who onely conuerteth
vs from sinnes, purgeth our sinnes, reconcileth vs to God, and maketh vs
inheritors of the kingdome of heauen. This Christ hath Peter in his ser-
mon taught them, and sheweth them that in him the treasure of saluation
is opened vnto them, notwithstanding it might seeme they were fallen from
saluation and the grace of God. Let vs therefore thinke these things

All pre-
rogatiues with
out Christ be
of no value.

spoken also vnto vs, and labour to become the true mem-

bers of Christ, and to be quickened with his spirite,

that hereafter we may raigne with him in hea-

uen: to whome be prayse, honour,

glory, and power for e-

uer. Amen.

The

The fourth chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The. xxvj. Homelie.

As they spake vnto the people, the Priestes and the Rulers of the Temple, and the Saduceys came vpon them, taking it grieuouly that they taught the people, and preached in Iesus the resurrection from death. And they laide handes vpon them, and put them in holde, vntill the next day, for it was now euentide. Howbeit many of them which hearde the wordes, beleued, and the number of the men was about fūe thousande.



Hitherto Luke hath described the beginning and successe of the primitive church. There haue we seene what the doctrine of the Apostles was, which they deliuered vnto the Church: also what the studies and exercises of the primitive Church were. Nowe hereto is most commodiously adioyned, how the worlde receyued this doctrine: where we shall see howe the very same thing fell out, that Christ before that, shewed his Apostles of. For in Iohn he sayth: The seruant is not greater than

Iohn. 15.

Math. 10.

Iohn. 3.

his Maister. If they haue persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they haue kept my saying, they will keepe yours. Againe: They shall deliuer you vp to the Councels, and shall scourge you in their sinagoges. And these things they (whom God had hitherto kept safe from the furie of their enimies, but till the beginning of his Church myght be stablished and settled a little suffer) beginne nowe to finde true. But nowe most fierce enimies sodenlye rushe in vpon them, they take and cast them into prison, they bring them to examination before the Counsaile, and at length being vexed with long disceptation and reasoning, they dismisse them with grieuous threats. We must in all this narration, marke this one thing chiefly aboue all other, which shall serue much for our consolation and instruction: that is, not to be offended at the attempts of the wicked, wherewith in these dayes, they op- pugn the doctrine of Christ and his Church. For this worlde, whose pro- pertye it is to hate and persecute the light of the truth, because it bewrayeth their naughtie doings, bleseth of olde thus for to doe. Here it behoueth vs to be armed with the constancie of the primitive Church, that we leaue not our place when we are assaulted, but that we wayte for an happie ende and successe of such temptation with a stronge and inuincible sayth, which

God

God graunteth vnto them, whome he seeth tried, and made the better vnder the crosse. But bicause we shall haue occasion oftentimes to speake of these things, let it suffice vs to haue touched this little hereof, least we lose the marke, whereto all these things must be directed. Nowe we shall discusse euery part and circumstance of the things that Luke hath sayde. He describeth who were the Apostles enemies, and authors of their persecution, what craftes, and deceite they vsed, what cloke they had for their wicked and vniust enterprise, howe violently they layde handes on the Apostles, and howe baine their attempt was, bicause through their furie the number of the faythfull were rather increased than diminished.

Among the enemies of the Apostles, there are three kindes of men rehearsed. The first are Priestes, whome by the circumstance, we may easilye gather were the ringleaders and beginners of all this businesse. Howbeit it had bene their partes rather to haue taken vpon them the defence of the truth, and to haue preached Christ vnto the people, of whome Moyse and the Prophetes bare witnesse. After these followeth the Ruler of the Temple, who (by all likelyhoode) was some Capitaine of the Romaine souldiours. For where the Temple stode in the most impregnable place of the Citie, and was well fenced with munition: I suppose the Romaines gaue the Presidentes of Iurie a speciall charge thereof, least the Jewes vnder colour of religion and holy assemblies, shoulde moue any insurrection or sedition. And vndoubtedly, the Capitaine of the Temple brought with him his garde or souldiours, which alwayes attended on his seruice, & were at his commaundement. There was a thirde kinde of men beside these, called Saduceyes, who plainly scoffed at all religion. For they denyed the resurrection of the bodie, and whatsoeuer else is written of the mysteries of eternall life, as may be seene Math. 22. and Actes. 23. And it can not be that any sincere religion coulde be in them, which durst denye these things, without the which, religion coulde not stande. And if we expende the matter well, it shall appeare that the same men came against the Apostles, which were sent out to take Christ at mount Oliuete, as Luke in his Gospel sheweth.

Let vs here marke, who are alwayes like to be the greatest enemies of the Church, and doctrine of Christ, and authors of persecution. Verily, the Priestes, that is to say, those which take vpon them the gouernance of doctrine, and of the whole Church. For as soone as they being overcome with ambition and couetousnesse, beginne to seeke priuate honour, and change religion into lucre (which the storie of the Gospel abundantly declareth) those Jewish doctors did: Math. 7. 23. Iohn. 5. &c.) it can not be chosen but they will be the first to withstand the truth, bicause they are the first that are reprovved through the light of the truth. Hereof we see it cometh to passe in all ages, that these kinde of men haue procured most trouble against the doctrine of truth. The times that the Prophetes liued in, declare this to be true, against whome the Bishops and Priestes made most a do. The same, Iohn the Baptist proued true, whose doctrine and Baptisme the Leuites sent from Jerusalem, beganne first to reprehend. And Christ had no sorer enemies than the Priestes, through whose deuises he was taken, condemned, and nayled to the crosse. The Apostles nowe finde the same to be their grievouslest enemies. And those whom Pylate and the Ro-

maine

1. Cor. 10.

The authors
of the Apo-
stles perse-
cution.

Luke. 22.

1. The enemies
of Christ
and his Gos-
pell.

Iohn. 1.

maine garrison hytherto suffred to preache Christ, are disturbed by them, whose fauour and defence they ought to haue had, in setting forth the kingdome of Christ. Let vs remember this geare, and not be troubled, though we perceiue those against vs in these dayes, which hitherto haue challenged to themselves in the Church, the name of learning and holynesse. I meane the Popes with all the rable of Bishops, and Monkes. For where it is euident they are all ledde with couetousnesse and ambition, and haue long since obscured the doctrine of truth with mannes traditions, and haue made lucre of religion, it cannot be but they must hate the light of the truth, and with the extinguishment thereof.

2. The craft
of the enimi-
es of truth.

But let vs consider the craft which they vse in setting vppon the Apostles. First, they enter not into the Church alone, and so laye hande vpon the Apostles. For so all men woulde haue perceiued howe they had bene led with the desire of their priuate honoz and lucre. And it was a daungerous matter for them to prouoke the furie and rage of the people against them. Wherefore they ioyne vnto them the ruler of the Temple, who was authorisid by publike order, to see there shoulde be no businesse made in the Church: and so they woulde seeme to haue a regard of publike tranquillitie: where in dede they did it for none other purpose, but to vse the ayde of the officer for the defence of their tyrannie. Then ioyne they also vnto them the Saduceyes, men boyde of all religion, bicause they thought such, most test for their purpose. For such men as these, thinke it a poynt eyther of a foolishe, or a seditious minde, contrary to custome to alter any thing in religion. Last of all, they rushe in vpon them as they be in their sermon, and that sodenly, bicause they would feare the people withall. Wherevpon we may thinke they had consulted hereof befoze, and that they did nothing at aladuenture or without deliberation. The like craft haue all they vsed against the truth, which now these many yeares haue conspired against the same. For Daniel attributeth to Antichrist the eyes of a man, that is to say, witte and wylinesse to foresee things. And Christ sayth, the children of this worlde are wyser in their kinde, than the children of lyght. And surely if we well consider the hystories of the Bishops of Rome, we shall see they haue vsed the lyke wylinesse these many yeares, and that they haue then chiefly set forwarde their owne matters, when they haue seemed to do nothing lesse, and being bolstred by the secular powers, haue clymed vp to such rule and tyrannie as now they exercise. So Boniface the thirde made Plocas embzued with the heynous murther of Maurice his maister the Emperour, to thintent that he againe might make him the supzeme head of the Church. So by the strength of the Lumbardes, they draue the Emperours of Greece out of Italie, and when the Lumbardes seemed to them more intoilerable, than the Graekes, they vsed the Frenchmens ayde to subdue the Lumbardes. Neyther made they Charles Emperoz of the west Church (where the Romaines had bene without an Emperour more than thre hundred yeares) for any other cause, but to haue a Captaine or ruler of the Church, whose ayde and helpe, they might vse to defende their vsurped power ouer the Church, and to byrdle such as woulde speake against it. They most plainely betrayed their meaning, when they conueyed the Empire to the Germaines, and caused the Emperours to sweare homage, and obedience to them, and reserued the authoritie of confirming and

Dan. 7.
Luc. 16.

Platina.
Sabellicus.
Carion.

and crowning the Emperour to themselves: least any other, than such as would doe after their pleasure, should ascende to such dignitie. They shall confesse that I say the truth, whosoever will reade the fourme of oth wherewith the Emperours are bounde, and which they haue put among the Canons of their lawe, and also the Canon of Boniface the eyght concerning maiortie and obedience. For he speaking of two swordes, that is, of the ecclesiasticall and secular power doth expressely challenge them both vnto the Bishops of Rome, in these words. Both are in the power of the Church, namely, the spirituall swoorde and the materiall. But the one to bee exercised of the Church, the other for the Church. The one by the hande of the Priest, the other by the hande of Princes and souldiours, but at the becke and sufferaunce of the Priest. &c. Let vs therefore acknowledge the truth of the olde President, when we see Bishops fight against the truth, with force of kinges. Let vs marke the subtiltie of this beast which compasseth hir matters by strength of others. Let vs consider hir continuall traueye in oppressing the truth, and not iudge of them according to our leysinesse. They wake when we soundly snort. Let vs therfore awake likewise, and according to Christes admonition, beware of men.

Howbeit, it might seeme a straunge and tyrannicall deepe violently to carie men away without order of lawe. Therefore Luke sheweth what their pretence was: They tooke it grievously (sayth he) that they taught the people, and preached in Iesus the resurrection from the deade. In these words he sheweth not only what grieved them, but also what things they layde to the Apostles charge. Verily two thinges. First, it seemeth to them a thing intollerable that Peter and Iohn being rude and vnlearned men, which all their time before this, had gotten their living by fishing, and had taken none orders, shoulde teache the people. This seemed a thing tending to schisme, and to bring the people from the vnitie of the Church. For the matter was come to that passe among the Jewes, that all administration of the Church was in the Priestes handes, which would admitte none to teache in the Church, but those that were swozne to them, which thing we see the Bishops of Rome haue done these many yeares, in whose Church (as Christ hath prophesied in his reuelation) no man may buye or sell, except he haue the marke of the beast. Yet we would not haue our meaning so taken, as though all men in the Church should be permitted to preach without exception. For we know what the Apostles haue taught touching the ordering of Ministers. But we condemne the tyrannie of them, which challenge to themselue onely all power, whereas they chiefly are authozs of all the mischief in the Church, and deserue not to haue the lowest roume and place in the Church. Secondly, they thinke this worthy of punishment that they preach Iesus to be risen from the deade. The Saduceyes wholly condemned the doctrine of resurrection. But another thing grieved some of them more. For euery man might gather of this rising againe, that Christ was the sonne of God, and the authoz of life, and vniustly condemned of the Priestes and of Pylate, as Peter openly sayd in his sermon. But this was not only an intollerable slaunder, but also a sedicious matter to charge the Apostles that they went about to rayse the people against the bloudy and vniust Judges. The Apostles therefore are charged with two most heynous crimes: to say, with schisme in the Church, and sedition

Math. 10.

3. By what
pretence truth
is assaulted.

Apoc. 13.

1. Tim. 3.
and. 5. &c.

in the common weale: both which, not without a cause seeme to all good men both hatefull and detestable. But if we weygh and consider the intent of the Priestes and their conditions, we shall easily perceyue this was but a vaine pretence. For if they cannot abide schisme in the Church, why regarded they the Saduceyes so much, who it is euident were not ashamed to denie the chiefe article of fayth and saluation, that is to say, the resurrection of the body: Why suffer they the Essenes and Phariseys, men plainly of diuers sectes and opinions? If they abhorre the crime of sedition so much, why were they the authoꝝ that the people asked Barrabas a seditious felow and murtherer to be giuen them, and required that Christ might be crucified: Therefore they are not so much moued with daunger of schisme and sedition, as ledde with hatred of the truth, and it grieueth them that their naughtinesse and wickednesse is disclosed through the light thereof.

In the meane season we maye see with what pretence the wicked stryue and contende against the truth. For it is euident in all ages, that the defenders of the truth were taken for schismatikes and seditious persons. Elias is charged that he troubleth all Israel. Amos the Prophete is accused to Hieroboam of sedition. Christ also before Pylate is called a deceyuer of the people, and charged to affectate or aspire vnto the kingdome against Caesar. The same crimes also in tynes passed were layde to the Christians charges in the tynes of the Emperours, as appeareth by Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, and others writings, wherein they make answer to the reproches and slaunders of the Gentyles. And in these dayes also the Gospell is for this cause chiefly spoken against, because it rippeth Christes coate without the seame, that is to say, the Church deuideth mens mindes, and kindleth warres. But the aunswere to these things is easie, and it is well knowne that it is a farre other thing, that wringeth and disquieteth these men. For if they will not haue the Church deuided, why beseech you doe they so highly commend the rules and orders of Monkes, whereby they which only ought to professe the name of Christ, are deuided into molt sundrye rytes, and factious names, why hearken they not to Paule, which most grievously condemneth such thinges? If they abhorre diuision so greatly, how commeth it to passe that the Bishops of Rome are the authoꝝ of all the warres that haue bene these many yeares? We may thanke them for the horrible schisme, and neuer ynough bewayled, of all Christendome, whereby the East Church was rent and deuided from the West, and at length subdued to the tyrannie of the wicked Turkes: who can iustly be named the authoꝝ and beginner of the holye warre, whereby all Christendome molt unhappily was set by the eares, and riuers of mans blood were shedde, but the sea of Rome? I appeale vnto hystories which shall beare witnesse that I speake the truth, and leane not to priuate affection. See we not at this daye the Popes Legates in Princes Tentis, and in the Campe among souldiers? See we not howe they encrease through the discorde of Princes, and establishe tyrannie in the Church? And where the lyght of the Gospell reprooueth these things, by and by they accuse vs of schisme and sedition. Wherefore (O Christian Princes) acknowledge once their craft, and hauing so often bene warned, be wylle, and vse not crueltie against your brethren and Christes members, for their sakes, who, it is manifest, are the greatest plagues of all other vnto publike peace and

1. Reg. 18.

Amos. 7.

1. Cor. 1. 3.

tranquillitie.

But some men maye marueyle why the Apostles aunswered not the crimes layde to their charge. But Luke teacheth plainely what the let therof was. For by and by they layde handes on them, and had them to prison, and that they did with the more haste, bicause they shoulde haue no leysure to make their purgation befoze the people. This is the propertie of the enimies of truth, with open force to procede against the professors thereof, hauing alwayes an eye vnto this, that the faithfull shall haue no place or leysure to excuse themselues. For they knowe the force of veritie is such, that the light thereof will easily disclose all their attemptes, and they wote well howe they are in most safetie, when the people are in most ignorance. Therefore as they vse to spreade false accusations amonge the people, of such as are godly: so they labour all they can, that no man shoulde vnderstande their innocencie. Therefore where they should by reasons and scriptures go to worke, they vse plaine force, halters, prisons, swordes, fire, and such other like. This is more euident than needeth any long proffe. Yet let them remember, as Christ testifieth, that this is the power of darkenesse, and that with the Prince of darkenesse they shall one daye be punished, for their tyrannie and vngodlynesse. We learne by the example of the Apostles who they be that are vnworthily recompenced of this vnkinde worlde, for their faithfull endeouour and godlynesse, and not to be offended if the like also fall out vpon vs.

But least we shoulde haue any iust occasion to be offended, the Evangelist teacheth vs how little the wicked with all their tyrannie preuailed against Christ and his Church: Many (sayth he) of them that heard the words, beleueed, and the number of the men was aboute fife thousande. What shoulde we here first saye or marueyle at, O brethren: The vnspeakable power of God, or the wonderfull constancie and boldenesse of the faythfull of that time: Here appeareth the inuincible power of Christ, which doth not only scatter the counsell of his enimies, but also turneth it vpside downe: which Dauid once prophesied he should doe. They go about to stoppe the course of the Gospell, and by feare to pull men from the Church of Christ. But they are so deceyued, that rather, maye be perceyued a marueylous fruite of the Gospell, and newe scholers are added vnto the Church of Christ. This is the perpetuall condicion of the Church, that by persecutions it encreaseth. The same came to passe longe agone in Babylon, what time the kinges of Assiria and Persia did set forth God and his religion. Under the Romaine Emperours, the whoter the persecution was, the more there were that thought it a goodlye matter to confesse Christ with their bloude. This is it that Dauid sayth, Christ shall reigne or beare rule in the middle of his enimies. Let vs followe the boldenesse of the primitive Church, and not be feared with the crosse or rage of persecutors. They shewe crueltie but vpon our bodie, and that no further than God permitteth, but vpon our soule they haue no power at all. They binde the Preachers of the worde, and the faithfull hearers, but the worde of God cannot be bounde. For the spirite of the Lorde bloweth not where the worlde will, but where it selfe will. Further, he is greater that worketh in vs, than he that so rageth in the worlde. Christ worketh in vs, through whose comfort we are able to doe all things. He is a strong and faithfull shepheard, which will not suf-

4. They fight against the truth by open force.

Luke. 22.

5. Through persecution the Church encreaseth.

Psal. 2. 33.

Dan. 3. 6.

Psal. 110.

Math. 10.

2. Tim. 2.

Iohn 3.

Iohn. 12. 16

Phil. 4.

Iohn. 10.

fer his sheepe to be taken from him. He hath prepared for vs a place in heauen, to the which it becommeth vs by the crosse and all maner of tribulations to come, that we may liue with him, and reigne in the house of his father: To whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The. xxvij. Homelie.

AND it came to passe on the morowe, that their Rulers and Elders, and Scribes, and Annas the chiefe priest, and Caiphas, and Iohn, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kinred of the high priestes, gathered togither at Ierusalem. And when they had set them before them, they asked: By what power, or in what name haue you done this? Then Peter full of the holye ghost sayde vnto them: you Rulers of the people, and Elders of Israel, if we this daye be examined of the good deede that we haue done to the sicke man, by what meanes he is made whole: Be it knowen vnto you all, and to all the people of Israell, that by the name of Iesus Christ of Nazareth, whome you crucified, whome God raysted vp againe from death, euen by him doth this man stande here present before you whole. This is the stone which was cast awaye of you builders, which is become the chiefe of the corner. Neyther is there saluation in any other. For amonge men vnder heauen, there is giuen none other name, wherein we must be saued.



Although our Lorde and Sauour Iesus Christ according to his promises, neuer fayleth those which embrace him with true fayth, yet he chiefly succoureth them when they are persecuted of their enimies, and finde no helpe in man, wherevnto to leane. And then he comforteth them not onely with his spirite, but also sheweth them what to doe and to saye. This present hystorie giueth vs an example hereof, whyle the wyse men, and of greatest

power in the world, after the worlds iudgement, be ouercome and shamefully confounded by Christes Apostles, being but vnlearned men, and of no estimation. We haue seene howe the Apostles were had to prison, because they tooke vpon them the office of preaching, and taught howe Christ was risen from death, being not licensed thereto of the Bishops. But now Luke declareth how they handled Christes cause, before the counsell at Ierusalem: which place as well for many other skilles, as for this chiefly, is notable, because it containeth the craftynesse of the enimies of truth, and an example of a counsell of Bishops assembled against the truth.

He beginneth with the benche of the Iudges, which he painteth out with a diligent rehearfall of all them that were gathered together, not only because we should vnderstande, who and what maner of men were assembled, but also that we might perceyue howe the enimies of truth trust more in the authoritie and power of men, than in any thing else. It came to passe (sayde he) that their Rulers and Elders, and Scribes of Hierusalem. &c. Whatsoeuer was of any excellencie or authoritie among the Jewes, he comprehendeth in thre degrees. They are Rulers to whome the Romaines had committed the gouernaunce of such thinges, as chiefly concerned the con-

stitutions

Math. 10.
Marc. 13.
Luke. 21.

1. The descri-
ption of the
counsel of the
Rulers and
Elders.

stitutions and rules of Iurie, wherein they differed from others. The Elders were the state of the Senators, as appeareth by other places of the Scripture. The Scribes are they which attributed to themselves the knowledge of the lawe, and the Scriptures, and who had the keeping of the publike writings, and recordes. And not contented to haue rehearsed these degrees, he reciteth also the names of certaine other of most authoritie amongst them, that is to saye Annas, who saemeth here to be the high Priest, not bicause he was then Bishop (for the histories report that Caiphas was this yeare Bishop) but bicause he had bene Bishop before, then Caiphas, Iohn, and Alexander, whereunto afterwarde he ioyneth all those that were of the high Priests kinred. Now, if you consider well this bench, you shall perceiue there was nothing at that present of greater honour. For they whose power was of most authoritie with the Romaine Presidentes, were all assembled together. They also were there, to whome the publike administration of the Church was committed. And they whose name and fame for learning and doctrine was greatest among the people, were there. But herein stode the chiefe poynt of all others, that these degrees of men, were instituted of God, and commended for the succession, of about a thousande and fife hundred yeares, if we count from the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, or from the time that Aaron was Byshop, vntill the dayes of Christ and his Apostles. And in dedde they might call themselves the successors of Aaron, Eleazar, Abiathar, Iehosuah, and others, to whome there is no small prayse attributed in the Scriptures. With these men are the Apostles coped, yea, they are brought before them and accused, being at that time taken for the most abiect and despised men of all others: hauing neyther nobilitie of birth, renoume of succession, neyther any other worldly dignitie or honor, to commend them of: and at whome many men were offended, bicause of that slaunderous punishment of the crosse, which Christ their maister and teacher suffered. Yet the ende of this Tragedie sheweth howe they had the ouerhande of all these persons. And let no man thinke it straunge to see such a sort and such maner of men come together against the Preachers of the truth, bicause the Euangelistes manye times shewe vs the reason thereof. For where they were ledde with the desire of ambition and priuate lucre, and had corrupted the doctrine of truth with the traditions of men, and had turned godlynesse into lucre and gaine, they were not able to abide the light of the truth, the hatred whereof had armed them before against Christ, and euen now pricketh them forward, to ioine agaynst the Apostles, speedilye to make awaye with them, like men that would utterly quench some great fire begune in a Citie. The consideration hereof in the meane while, serueth for our instruction. For first we learne that no man ought to be offended at the power and authoritie of Christs enemies, so that he eyther dishonestly be afrayde of them, or else through any preposterous reuerence submit himselfe, and Gods religion, to their iudgement. For as God can easilye defende those that be his, against all the power of the worlde, so is there no dignitie of man, able to preiudice or countermaunde his worde. The Byshops of Rome in these dayes, challenge such an authoritie vnto them, and imperiouslye inough require men to obey the decrees of their Counsels. Their chiefe argumentes are, that they sit in Peters chaire, that they succede in the rourne of the Apostles, that

their

their power is confirmed by the authoritie of Kinges & Princes. And to graunt them these thinges (which yet they falsely challenge to themselves) all these things we maye see here in the Jewes, as erewhile we declared. Yet for all that, the Apostles doe not yeelde to them, because they had long before sworne and gone out of kinde, in that they had both corrupted the true doctrine, made outwarde religion their private lucre, and had openly persecuted Goddes veritie and truth. Therefore where our case in these dayes is like, why may not we doe, as the Apostles did? Neyther are they to be regarded, which promise themselves, I wote not what great commoditie of these mennes counsailes. An euill tree cannot bring forth good fruite. And what goodnesse can they establishe which persecute the worde of God, and studie both daye and night to establishe their tyrannie? And who in their iudgementes haue longe agoone condemned vs, and haue none whome they stande in awe of. They woulde haue the truth oppressed, the light whereof they cannot abide. Therefore whosoever woulde haue the truth betrayed, let him commit the iudgement of doctrine and religion to these men. But great is the blindenesse of our dayes, whereby it cometh to passe, that a great many both wittingly and willingly submit not onely religion, but also all their goodes and the libertie of their Countrey, to the insatiable lust of a sort of ambitious Prelates.

2. The question of the counsaile of Priests.

But it shall be good for vs to consider the question which the Jewische Priests vse against the Apostles being brought before them. The same is comprehended in fewe wordes, for that they woulde seeme to speake with authoritie, and to fraye them with a vaine shewe of dignitie. For they say: By what power, or in what name haue you done this? These wordes seeme to haue some shewe of godly zeale. For they will seeme by vertue of their office, to demaund this thing, as to whom it belonged, to see that the people shoulde not be seduced, eyther with false doctrine, or false myracles. Howbeit in daede, they demaunde it, to trie if they coulde take any holde of their wordes, whereby to accuse them, which craft they many times also practised agaynst Christ. For what neede had they to demaund that thing againe wherof the Apostles before in the temple, had rendred so euident a reason: or had they forgotten that Iesus Christ through his owne power wrought myracles, and the Apostles long before that, in his name? Therefore their desire was not to learne the truth, but subtillye by craft to circumuent the vntwarie. They are like the demaundes of them, which now a dayes, aske our men where they learned their newe doctrine, by what authoritie they sowe new opinions, and refoyme their Churches? Howbeit we haue long sithence rendred a reason hereof, whereof they are not ignozant. Therefore it is a farre other thing, than the desire of truth, that these men be ledde with: nay, their whole drift and fetch is, to catch some occasion, or holde of some worde, which might vntwares escape vs, to accuse vs of. Therefore we ought to suspect all such Counsailes and deuises, and as Christ taught vs, to vse the wisdom of the serpent in auoyding them. And we must not be afrayde of their craft, seeing Christ hath promised vs his spirite, wherewith Peter being prompted, answered with great boldenesse of minde.

3. Peters aunswere.

Peters aunswere consisteth of two partes, whereof, the one answereth the Judges question, and the other preacheth Christ. The first part he handleth with marueylous prudence. For before he sheweth that Christ is the

author

author of the myracle, he grauely reprehendeth their vnrighteousnesse and preposterous iudgement. Yet not defrauding them of the honour due vnto magistrates by Gods commaundement, least he might seeme to speake of corrupt affection, or of ticklenesse of tongue. Thus he sayth: Ye rulers of the people, and Elders of Israell, if we this daye be examined of the good deeде that wee haue done to the sicke man, by what meanes hee is made whole: bee it knowne vnto you all. &c. He seemeth thus to saye: we marueyled trulye, wherefore we were yester daye caried to the prison, and what fault we had made, that you so earnestly searched for. For where it is the Magistrates dutie to enquire after malefactorz and euill doers, and we by our selues knewe none euill that we had committed: we coulde not choise but marueyle much at your doing. But as farre as we nowe can perceyue, we are called before you, for a benefite and good deeде that we haue bestowed vpon a poore and pitifull man. This seemeth me to be the sense of Peters wordes. And in these thinges we haue painted out a plaine portraiture of the enemies of the truth, by whose iudgement they only are in fault, that only seeke to serue Christ. For howe many thinke we, were then in Hierusalem, which by craft, lying, slaundering, vsurie, extortion, open force, and manslaughter, had hurt and hindered a many of men: how many which through false doctrine, superstition, blasphemie, and infinite other wickedneses had prouoked the wrath of God: yet none of them were called Coram. Neither could these notable Comptrollers espie any thing in these mennes conuersation. Naye, such as these, sate highest among them. Yet are the Apostles who hitherto had hurt no man, but profited a great many, cyted, examined, and commaunded to prison. So in these dayes where men burne in hatred of the truth, all men may freely be naught. But to preache Christ, and to call mennes mindes through his doctrine from superstition and ydolatrie, that is an heynous matter I warrant you. This is the olde corruption of the worlde, which neuer is afrayde of punishment for sinne, but abhorreth and hateth them most, which endeouour to bring them to God.

After Peter had reprehended their vniust proceeding, he answereth their question more apparantly, and testifieth that Iesus Christ is the only author of the myracle. Be it knowne (sayth he) to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Iesus Christ of Nazareth, whome you crucified, whome God ray sed agayne from death, euen by him, doth this man stande here present before you whole. He repeateth the same here againe that he sayde in the Church. For he so ascribeth to Christ only the glorie of the myracle, that therewith also he casteth in their teeth their wickednesse, committed against the sonne of God. He maketh mention also of Christes resurrection, to shewe them that they stroue against him in vaine, seeing he whome they thought to haue made out of the waye, had overcome death, and nowe liued in glory. Peters example is to be well marked, for thereby we are taught howe to deale with the professed enemies of the truth. He giueth them such honor, as God doth vouchsafe to giue vnto Iudges, as euen nowe was declared. Yet he abstaineth from all kinde of vile flatterie: yea, rather he freely and frankly vttereth those thinges, which make for the setting forth of Christes truth and glorie. For both he telleth them of their wicked deeде, and sheweth them, that he whome they persecuted, liueth and reigneth. This waye must we also take, least eyther we suffer our tongue

to

Howe wee
must deale
with the en-
emies of the
truth.

to runne at ryot, or else for cowardly feare or fauour, dissemble the truth for as it is not meete we should followe the childzen of this worlde in euill speaking: so the enemies of the truth are not worthy to haue their tyrannie and wickednesse spared. We haue other examples of this kinde, both in the Prophetes and in the Apostles. But it shall be best to followe the prompting of the holy spirite, which neuer fayleth them that are zealous towarde Christ.

The seconde
part of Peters
answer.

The place of
the. 118. psal.

Now best, where the Apostles were chiefly appointed to preach Christ vnto the worlde, here Peter also forgetteth not his dutie, but taking occasion of the premisses, teacheth in fewe wordes, that all our saluation is con- teyned in Christ alone. But this seemed a great stumbling block, because Jesus Christ was condemned by them, which had power in the Church, by Gods appoyntment to teache and administer euery thing. Therefore he first remoueth this block out of the waye, alleaging the wordes of Dauid, out of the. Cxviij. psalme, which wordes Christ also bled, as we reade in the Gospell. For Dauid who was a figure of Christ, speaking of himselfe, sayth: The same stone which the builders refused, is become the heade stone in the corner. Which wordes Peter expressely expounding of Christ, and the Priestes of the Jewes, sayth: This is the stone which was cast away of you builders, which is become the chiefe of the corner. The sense of the wordes is this: I knowe that both you and also other manieyle greatly, why we as- cribe so great prayse and glory vnto Christ, and say that he liueth and raig- neth and is risen againe from death, whom you by shamefull death, would haue made out of the waye. But this ought to offende no man. Nay rather ye maye learne, that he is the same Jesus whome the Prophetes long be- fore sayde shoulde come: haue you forgotten that saying of Dauid, which tea- cheth vs that so God had appointed, that the Messias shoulde be reiected of them, which ought to haue builded by Gods Church, and to bring all men vnto him: you your selues are those builders. For vnto you was commit- ted the office of teaching, and the whole ordning of religion. You haue reie- cted Jesus, and would giue him no place in the Church of God. Him hath God raised from death, and made him the head of the corner, that is, a Lord and a sauour, and the ruler of his Church. And hath so inclosed in him only, all saluation, that without him, the same is no where else to be founde. For among men vnder heauen, there is none other name giuen wherein we can be saued. Peter therefore so preacheth Jesus to be a sauour, that he therewith denieth all hope of saluation to them which disdain to embrace him. Here are three things to be considered, the consideration whe reof is no lesse profitable than necessary.

Christ is re-
iect: d of the
builders.

The Pope
errett by his
owne confes-

The first is, howe the holy ghost foresheweth, that Christ should be re- fused of those, which by Goddes appoyntment were the chiefe among the people. This reprooueth the wicked pride of the Bishops of Rome, which say they cannot erre. For although it were manifest they were appointed of God: yet that they cannot erre shoulde neuer be graunted them, seeing they which were ordeyned by God haue so often erred. But while they saye they cannot erre, they betray their follie, whereas now their errors are open, not onely to Barbours and bleare eyed, (as is in the Proverbe) but also to boyes and children. Clement the seauenth, being Pope, confessed this grosse ignorance, or rather impudent lust of theirs to lye. For where at his

table

table two Monks (as their maner is) were disputing whether y^e Pope could erre or no: after many words to & fro, they agreed he might erre, as he was a man, but as he was Pope & Chyistes vicar on earth, he could by no means erre. Clement, offended with this most impudent & more than flauelike flatterie, sayd to the Monke with angrie moode: nay I confesse, that euen as I am Pope, I both may and often doe erre. For whyle I bestowe benefices and other ecclesiasticall dignities (as I suppose) vpon good & godly persons: I find at length they be very knaues, & woorthy of no honor. Let them listen to this oracle of their Caiphaz, which now a dayes haue y^e Popes in such admiration that they thinke it an heinous matter to swaue one nailles bredth from their decrees. Furthermore, this place teacheth vs not to be offended when we see Chyist reiected of the states of the world, & of those which some men take for the pillers, henges & heads of the church. This is the auncient guise of y^e world, which vseth to preferre darknesse before light, which thing Esaias complaineth of, when in declaring of the mysteries of Chyist, he saith, there were but few that would beleue him, & truly acknowledge the power of the Lorde. And Chyist testifieth that these mysteries are reuealed to little ones, & hidden from the wise of this world. Yea, he preferreth Publicanes and harlots to the kingdome of God, before these, whome Peter here reasoneth with. Let this comfort vs, that we knowe Chyistes honor remayneth safe and sounde, howsoeuer the wicked worlde rageth against him. For of him hath God sayde from euerlasting: I haue set my king vpon my holy hill of Syon. I will preache the lawe whereof the Lorde hath sayde vnto me: Thou art my sonne, this daye haue I begotten thee. Aske of me and I shall giue thee the heathen for thine enheritance. &c.

Secondly, here is an Allegorie to be considered, where the Rulers of the Church are compared vnto builders. For this thing both admonisheth them of their dutie, and setteth forth their whole office. The name of a builder is not a name of honor, but of charge and dutie, and there is nothing so vnfitting for a deuiler or builder, as ydlenesse. For he onely amonge other that worke, labourereth not, but yet the whole charge and care of all the building, lyeth on his shoulders. And his ende is to haue a faire and sure house builded. Which ende that he may attaine vnto, he layeth a sure foundation, vpon the which, he setteth his whole frame, and his whole care is to haue it workmanly finished. These thinges the Ministers of the Church must obserue, whome the Lord hath called to labours and cares. For they are builders of the house of God, which is the congregation, as Paule saith. To the building vp of this house, let them bring al that they are able, remembryng, that they haue receyued power to builde, and not to destroye. Let them laye no newe foundation, but builde vpon that which the Lorde hath layde, which Paule calleth the foundation of the Prophetes and Apostles, which is Iesus Chyist. This is that precious stone layd to the foundations of Zion. This is that rocke wherevpon, we liuely stones, must be builded, and against which, the gates of hell shall not be able to preuaile. Now, as the building must be begunne with this stone, so the same stone is the chiefe and head stone of the toppe or corner. For in him is our perfection, and he ioyneth togi ther two nations, the Gentyles and the Jewes, into one body of a congregation, as the corner stone ioyneth together two walles. He professeth also he is the doore of this building. He is the true householder which

Eg.1.

hath

ston. Looke also if you wil what Platina repeyeth of Benedict the ix. who appered after he was deade, and sayde he was damned, because he had liued lawles. They that liue lawlesse and are damned must needs erre.

Esay. 53.

Math. 11.

Math. 21.

Psal. 2.

The Ministers of the Church are reſembled vnto builders.

2. Cor. 6.

1. Tim. 3.

2. Cor. 10.

1. Cor. 3.

Eph. 2.

Esay. 28.

1. Pet. 2.

Math. 16.

Eph. 2.

Iohn. 10.

Mat. 24. 25.

Math. 15.

Saluation
is in Christ
onely.

1. Pet. 2.

Math. 3. 17.

Esay. 42.

Iohn. 1.

Coloss. 1. 2.

1. Cor. 1.

Ioh. 4. 6. 7.

Math. 11.

Iohn. 14.

Ephes. 1.

hath committed the charge of the house to the Ministers, and will one day require a reckoning how they haue vsed his house. Therefore let all Ministers regarde this goodman of the house, and take hærde that they bring no hepe or stubble to this building, where mennes traditions haue naught to doe. As many as sayle in this poynt, they with the Jewes being builders vpon a naughtie sayth, reiect Christ, on whome they fall, and procure destruction to themselves. After the which rule, if they be well examined, which now a dayes will be taken for builders of the Church, it shall easily appeare what they may be iudged to be.

Last of all, this chiefe principle of Christian beliefe must be dæpelye layde vp in our mundes, wherein Peter ascribeth to Christ onely, the whole glory of our redemption, and saluation, saying: There is saluation in none other. That he proueth by the decre of God, adding: For among men vnder heauen, there is giuen none other name, wherein we must be saued. For as in the world, every thing must be brought to passe by those meanes, which god hath appointed therevnto: so is it impossible, that saluation can be attained to, by any other meanes, than by the merite of Christ, whom God (which is the only authoz of mans saluation) hath appointed from euerlasting to this purpose and businesse. And where it is euident, Goddes decre can not be broken, Peter thought this one place sufficient ynough, to confirme his opinion, which otherwise had other infinite places, wherby to proue the same. For no man can discharge the duety of a Sauour, but he that can take away sinne, overcome death, make intercession for vs before God, and giue righteousness and lyfe, to them that beleue in him. That all these thinges be in the power of Christ onely, all the Scripture teacheth vs, and him selfe cryeth out in the Prophete: I am the Lorde: This is my name, and my glorye will I not giue to another. And of him onely the father bare witness from heauen: This is my beloued sonne in whome I am well pleased. Of him he sometime pronounced by the Prophete: This is my seruauant vpon whome I leane, mine elect, in whome my soule is pacified. In him is giuen vnto vs grace and veritie. In him are all the treasures of knowledge, wisdom, and goodnesse of God opened vnto vs. He is made vnto vs of God, wisdom, righteousness, satisfaction, redemption and sanctification. He is to them that hunger, the breade of life, and to them that thirst, a fountaine of liuelye water. He promisseth to them that traueyle and are laden, refreshing, & giueth it them. He onely is the waye, which whosoever taketh not, hee cannot come vnto the father. He is the lambe of God slayne from the beginning of the world, through whose merite both the olde fathers were saued, and as many as beleue in him, shall be saued, vntill the worldes ende. Finally, in him Paule testifieth that we be chosen before the foundations of the worlde were layde. Therefore by this place all other religions which shewe vs any newe meanes of saluation beside Christ, are confuted. With this Hammer the Gentyles Idolatrie, the Jewes righteousness in their lawe, the Pharisees boasting and hypocrisie, the Popedome with all their market of pardons and merites, and all that confused Chaos of Monkish orders, are beaten downe, ouerturned, and brought to the ground. For whatsoeuer is beside Jesus, can neuer saue vs. Therefore they condemne not vs, but Peter of heresie, which in these dayes excommunicate vs, because we cleaue to Jesus, our onely sauour, condemning those things, which the superstition of man hath brought

brought bp. But we easily contemne their iudgementes, which learne of Peter, that it is no marueyle, if manye of the builders reiect this precious stone. We embrace him with constant fayth, without whome there is no saluation, and which hath promised to all them that beleue in him, saluation, and life euerlasting. To him be praise, honour, power and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.xxviii.Homely.

WHEN they sawe the boldnesse of Peter and Iohn, and vnderstoode that they were vnlearned and laye men, they marueyled, and they knewe them that they had bene with Iesu: And beholding also the manne which was healed, standing with them, they coude not saye agaynst it, but commaunded them to go aside out of the Counsell, and counsayled among themselues saying: what shall we do to these men? for a manifest signe is done by them, and is openly knowne to all them that dwell in Hierusalem, and wee cannot denie it. But that it bee noysed no further among the people, let vs threaten and charge them, that they speake hencefoorth to no manne in this name. And they called them, and commaunded them that in no wise they shoulde speake nor teach in the name of IESV.



The Apostle Peter so aunswereth the question propounded to him and to Iohn, in the counsell at Jerusalem, concerning the lame man that was healed, that he teacheth them not onely that they enquire of, but also declareth to them after a compendious and brieft sorte, the whole effect and summe of saluation. We are taught by this example, so to traueyle with the professed enemies of the truth, as to labour to winne them to Christ and to saluation. Which ende, Christ as it is manifest, set before him, as often as he had contention with his aduersaries. But now let vs see what effect ensued of Peters answere, which in so great behemencie of speech and earnest ayde of the holy ghost, coude be of no small force. Where we may see a marueylous confusion of mindes, which, that it might be the more perceyued, is so described of Luke, that first he declareth what an abayment it wrought in the counsell, then, what deuise and counsell they toke, concerning the Apostles: both which, we meane to entreate of in order.

First, they are filled with admiration, and amazednesse, and wotte not what way to take, in so much, that they know not what to say against it. And least any man might thinke they were fooles, or at their wittes ende for feare, he sheweth the causes which made them so perplexed and in doubt. First was the confidence and boldnesse of speech in the Apostles, which they here perceyued did surpasse their expectation. For they knewe they were simple and vnlearned men, not brought bp in faculties or artes, beside their mother tongue. They knewe they were taken from fythers craft to be the Apostles of Christ. And euen yet still did that olde opinion bewitch their mindes, which caused them once to saye, that none of the Scribes or Pharisees, but the accursed and rascall people, which were ignorant in the lawe and scriptures, helde with Christ. Therefore presupposing they shoulde ea-

1. They are amazed and wotte not what to doe.

Iohn. 7.

sily haue ouertome the Apostles, they could not chouse but be amazed, when
 they see them aunswere with such discretion, to their question, reproue their
 iniustice so boldlye, and defende Christes quarell with such wisdom and
 constancie. For they are compelled will they, nill they, to acknowledge
 some power of God in them, and perceyue they are ledde with a farre other
 wisdom than the wisdom of the fleshe. And this was the chiefe cause,
 why Christ woulde chouse ignorant and vnlearned Apostles, that the doc-
 trine of the Gospell might be acknowledged to be set forth by the power of
 God, and not through mans wisdom, eloquence, or authoritie, and that
 all the prayse and glorie thereof might redounde vnto God alone, whereof
 Paule disputeth at large in the first to the Corinthians the first Chapter.
 The other cause of their amazednesse, was the euident truth of the myracle
 wrought by the Apostles, which they are neyther able to call in doubt, nor
 yet to charge with any suspicion of Magicke, or enchauntment. For they
 see the man stande before them on whome the Apostles had bestowed this
 benefite of health, whether called by them, or of his owne accorde ioyned to
 them, to see the ende and successe of the matter, I wote not. Therefore
 they are in a perplexitie of minde, and haue not one worde to answere. So
 they which thought to haue overcome and caught the Apostles in some trip,
 by demaunding of one question, are shamefully vanquished and confound-
 ed. Here is fulfilled that which Christ promised, saying: I will giue you vi-
 teraunce and wisdom, against which, all your aduersaries shall not be able to
 make resistaunce. It appeareth also howe vaine the deuises of men are a-
 gainst Christ. He knoweth their cogitations to be vaine, and bringeth the coun-
 sayle of the heathen to naught, but the counsayle of the Lorde endureth for e-
 uer, as Dauid sayd Psal. 33. and. 94. For it is he verily, who (as Elephas the
 Themanite sayth) destroyeth the deuises of the subtil, so that their handes are
 not able to perfourme any stedfast thing, he compasseth the wyse in their owne
 craftynesse, and ouerthroweth the counsayles of the wicked. The Gospell
 sheweth vs a like example in a blinde man, restored by Christ to his sight
 againe, who being both vnlearned, and a begger, doth marueylously hold
 the whole Colledge of Scribes and Pharisees at a baye, that the more
 questions they aske of him, the more they vtter their foolishnes. Let no man
 therefore be afrayde, eyther of the power or craft of these enemies, where
 as God so easily turneth them both vpside downe. For it is not our cause that
 we haue in hande, but Gods, which will giue vs both a mouth and bte-
 rance, nor it is not we that speake, but the spirite of our father which is in vs.
 But before we leaue this place, we must speake somewhat of two things,
 very worthy to be obserued.

Luc. 21.

Iohn. 5.

Iohn. 9.

Math. 10.

Bodemesse
 of speache
 doth mooste
 conformed the
 wicked.

First, it is not without a cause that Luke writeth the wicked enemies of
 Christ were so amazed, at the bolde and free speech of the Apostles. For by
 this example we are taught that there is nothing so effectually to brydle the
 wicked, as is freedom of speach, where they are reproued to their faces,
 and the truth which they withstand, is boldly defended. For such is the force
 of wordes, that they easily pierce the minde. But if the zeale of Gods truth
 and glorie be ioyned therevnto, it cannot be, but the consciences of the hea-
 uers must be wounded, howsoeuer they many times dissemble the same.
 Whereby it cometh to passe, that although they alwayes do not truly re-
 pent, yet many times they counterfeyte repentaunce, and abstayne from
 doing

doing euill, where of we maye see a manifest example in Achab, after that Elias had with such libertie as beſermed a Prophete, vpbayded him with the vnworthy ſlaughter of Naboth. Againe, when the miniſters of the word ſuffer their tongues to be bydded, or elſe of themſelues keepe ſilence, to pleaſe the worlde, by and by we ſee the wicked are encouraged to runne into all kinde of licentious ſinne, and fill by the meaſure of iniquitie, and at length miſerably periſhe with their blinde watchmen and dumbe dogges. See Ezechiel the .iiij. and .xxiiij. Chapters. For the which cauſe a franke and bold kinde of reprehension is euerywhere required in the Miniſters. The Lorde ſayth vnto Eſaye, crye now as lowde as thou canſt, leaue not of, liſt vp thy voyce like a Trumpet, and ſhewe my people their offences, and the houſe of Iacob, their finnes. And the Lorde commaundeth Hieremie to ſtande againſt the Prieſtes, people, Princes, and Kinges, like a braſen wall without feare. Therefore Paule woulde haue ſinners openly rebuked afore all men, that other thereby might be brought in feare. Yea, where being in priſon, he commendeth himſelfe and his cauſe to the prayers of the congregation: Watch (ſayth he) with all inſtancie and prayer for all the Sainctes and for me, that vtterance may be giuen vnto me, that I may open my mouth freely to vtter the ſecretes of my Goſpell, whereof I am a meſſenger in bondes, that therein I may ſpeake freely as I ought to ſpeake. Therefore let the Miniſters neuer ſuffer this boldneſſe to be taken from them, for the which, they ſee the Apoſtle is ſo carefull.

Next, we muſt diligently conſider how he worſhipeth the lame man which was healed, ſtoode with the Apoſtles, when they pleaded their cauſe, and therefore was in daunger with them. This teacheth vs the ſtate and condition of the godly in this worlde. Alſoone as they haue receyued the benefite of ſaluation in Chriſt, they are vnder the perill and threates of the wicked. So Lazarus raiſed againe by Chriſt, was by and by in great hazarde, becauſe the Clergie of the Jewes ſought to make both Chriſt and him out of the waye. For as the wicked ſeeke to haue the glory of Chriſt extinguished: ſo can they not abide them, by whome the ſame is ſet forth and declared. This is diligently to be obſerued, leaſt while Chriſt offreth vs eternall ſaluation, we promiſe our ſelues the felicitie and friendſhip of this worlde, and being brought into a ſcoles paradiſe, when tribulation afterwarde cometh, we fall away from him, as we ſee many doe in theſe dayes, with the daunger of their ſaluation. Alſo this lame man is an example of a Chriſtian thankfulneſſe and courage, becauſe he forſaketh not his benefactors in their perils, but to his power, ſtandeth with them and helpeth them. Yet there were diuers reaſons wherewith he might haue excuſed himſelfe, and haue obtained pardon of the Rulers, for the benefite which he receiued of the Apoſtles. Yet we reade he bleſſed none of theſe things. His example reprooueth ſuch as are glad to receyue the benefite of Chriſtes ſaluation, but will abide neyther perill nor tribulation with him. Of whoſe number they alſo are, which are contented to haue all our ſaluation in Chriſt preached, but will not haue thoſe thinges ioynd therewith, which Chriſt pronounceth againſt Antichriſtes and deceyuers, becauſe they ſee many in the worlde are offended therewith. To whome alſo they are lyke, which greedily embrace the doctrine of ſaluation preached by the miniſters, and reioyce that they are deliuered out of the entanglings and caltropes of errour. But when

1. Reg. 21.

Eſay. 58.

Ierem. 1.

1. Tim. 5.

Eph. 6.

The lame
man ſtandeth
with the Apoſtles.

Iohn. 12.

Math. 16.
Iohn. 15. 16.

Marc. 8.

Rom. 1.

2. The decre
of the coun-
saile agaynst
the Apostles

Iohn. 5.

ecclesiasticall,
agaynst the
unfall of ge-
nerall.

when they see the worlde rageth and stormeth against the Ministers, they denie them all helpe and succour, yea, they shunne the sight of them, least they might seeme to holde with them. The worlde in these dayes is full of such men, and they may goe for the best, which openly rayle not at the ministers when they be in daunger, and giue them not vineger to drinke, as they hang vpon the crosse. But let them remēber Christ cannot be deuided, but that we must altogether be without him, or else receyue him in such sort as he is giuen vs of his father. The Scriptures set him forth crucified, and teach vs that by the crosse, he is entred into the glory of the father. We must embrace him in such sort, and come by the same way into the glory of heauen. He calleth those that be his, to the bearing of the crosse, and promi- seth them no better condicion nor being in the worlde, than that which he tasted and founde in the worlde. He cannot abyde those disciples and ser- uantes, which are ashamed of him, before this naughtie, adulterous and wicked worlde. Let vs therefore after the example of this lame man, be armed with a Christian stoutenesse, and saye euery one with Paule. I am not ashamed of the Gospell of Christ, for it is the power of God vnto saluation, to all that belecue in him.

Nowe, let vs come to the seconde part of this place, wherein is con- teyned what the Counsell decreed against the Apostles. For when they had commaunded them to go aside, they begin to consult among themselves: where maye be seene a marueylous perturbation, and confusion of mindes in them. First, what shall we doe (say they) to these men? A foolish and pre- posterous question. Were they ignorant that Innocents ought to be set at libertie, and those to be rewarded which had done good? But this way they betwray their pretended malice, seeking some meanes howe to vse crueltie against well doers, and those that were guyltlesse. But going yet further, they more and more vtter their selues, in that they confesse the truth of the myracle, saying: A manifest signe is wrought by them, and it is knowne to all the inhabitants of Hierusalem, and we cannot deny it. They are therefore wic- ked, bicause they yet conspire together against Christ the authoz of the my- racle. They confesse also what chiefly bygeth and offendeth them. For they make no mention neyther of God nor of Christ, but are only grieved that the matter is so knowne and spredde abroad among the people. Therefore they had more regarde of the people than of God, as who altogether de- pended vpon the estimation of the ignorant, and superstitious multitude, and had no care for the glorie of God: which thing Christ in one place sayth was the chiefe cause of their incurable vnbeliefe. At length they conclude what they will doe. The thing that was done coulde not be vndone. But perceyuing the daunger like to ensue by the peoples falling awaye from them, they thinke it good, that the matter be nopsed no further abroad. So with obliuion and forgetfulnesse they thinke to burie all memorie and re- membzaunce of Christ. And this they labour to bring to passe by threates and tyrannie, when they see they haue no reason therefore. Let vs threaten them (saye they) that they henceforth speake to no man in this name. And so they send for the Apostles, & with great grauity of words publish that godly decree of their sacred & ecclesiasticall counsel. What shal we here first either marueyle at, or detest, O brethren? Their impudencie & wicked tyrannie, or their dulheadnesse, and follye? They openly confesse that they cannot de-
nie

me the myracle, and yet they woulde haue it kept close. And that that was in euery bodys mouth, they forbidde the Apostles to speake of. Furthermore, they take vpon them to wrestle with Christ, whome they coulde not keepe in his graue when he was deade and buried with a garrison of armed men, and authoritie of the Romaine president, which sealed the graue-stone with his signet. And now he is on liue, and in his reigne the block-headed Disardes thinke with vaine bragges and threates to suppress and extinguishe his glozie.

Let vs here consider wherevnto obstinate impietie of minde, and hatred once conceived against the truth, bringeth men. They are not able to cease from struing against Gods counsaile and ordinaunce, no not when they perceiue themselves guiltie in their owne consciences. For surely there is no peace with the wicked, as the Prophet sayth. And their mindes rage like the sea being troubled and tossed with the waues and surges of affections. We haue examples hereof euerywhere, and in these dayes we see very many. For who is ignoraunt howe the light of the Gospell is pierced so farre in our dayes, that the very Popes haue many times confessed grievous abuses in their Church: They knowe also that not only the learned, but also artificers, mariners, Carters, ploughmen, children and women, can reason and iudge of religion. They see euerywhere how they be reproued in Sermons, by the ministers of the worde, howe the common people mocke them, howe in publike songes they are nicked and accused, and most liuely set forth and portraytured in all kinde of pictures and payntinges. And yet they still chalenge all kinde of iudgement in the Church. Still they say, they canot erre, forgetting vndoubtedly how they haue oftentimes confessed diuers abuses to be crept into the Church. Yet they dare commaunde the Ministers to silence, being not ignorant, that though they holde their peace, the stones will preach, as these many yeares they haue proued and tryed by their Pasquill. Yet they still thinke the crakes of their Bulles, and their vaine and counterfayte lightnings, are of sufficient power to oppresse the truth of Christ now reigning. O blinde and foolish people which see not so great light. O wicked and deuillish men which in the sight of all the worlde, are not afrayde to strue against God: But they shall one day see howe vnhappy an ende they shall haue, who being like vnto Saule, will not haue Dauid to reigne ouer them, and like vnto the Bishops of the Jewes, go about to put Iesus Christ the sonne of Dauid out of his kingdome.

Furthermore, we learne by the example of these men, howe dangerous a thing it is to committe the rule and authoritie of the Church to men boyde of religion and the feare of God. There can be no wisdom in them, because the beginning of wisdom (as Salomon witnesseth) is the feare of the Lorde. Therefore they runne beyonde the compasse of all reason, into all kinde of licentious affections, and then thinke they haue well discharged their office, if they can notifie to all men, that they are not vnder the checke eyther of Gods lawe or mannes. It would therefore be chiefly regarded in all elections aswell of ciuill as ecclesiasticall gouernors, that they shoulde haue a speciall care what religion they are of, as Iethro counsayled Moyses, whose aduise God well liked and approued. And let them which are put in office thinke, that they haue not power giuen them to doe what they list, but that their authoritie is restrained within the boundes of Gods lawe

The wicked-
ness of per-
secutors is
incurable.

Esa. 48. 57.

Psalmc. 2.

Power with-
out the feare
of God is
pernicious.
Prouer. 1.

Exod. 18.

Deut. 1.
Psal. 82.The worlde
cannot brooke
Christ and
his Gospell.Iohn. 2.
Mat. 15. 21

Rom. 10.

Iohn. 3.

1. Reg. 18.
Amos. 7.

lawe and religion, and that they shall one daye giue an account vnto God, who in the Scripture is sette forth for a paterne and president of all true iudgement. If Magistrates consider not these things, then is their power but in the hande (as it were) of a madde man, and they shall be the destruction as well of their common weale, as of themselues, where they ought to be the fathers and preseruers of their countrie. See the Psalm. 94. 11.

Finally, here may we behold, as in a glasse, the disposition and propertie of the worlde. Here are three sorts of men, all burning in hatred against the truth, and desirous to haue Christes name extinguished. The first sort be they, which chalenge to themselues the glozpe of mans redemption and saluation, such as it appeareth the Priestes of the Jewes once were, when they had turned the Temple and worship of God, into a most filthy fayer and market place, as Christ vpbayded them more than once. Their successors in these dayes, be those, which say the keyes of the kingdome of heauen belong only vnto them, and call sinners to kisse their faxe, selling to them remission and forgiuenesse of their sinnes: saying it is in their power eyther to canonize men for Saints in heauen, or else to throw them downe headlong into hell. Who, while they go about to establishe their owne glorie, can by no meanes abide the name of Christ, which ouerturneth all their gaine and glozpe. The seconde sort is very like vnto these. They will not affirme they can saue others, but they thinke they are able to saue themselues, and (as Paule sayth) going about with the Jewes to establishe their owne righteousness, will not be vnder the righteousness of God, which he giueth vs in his sonne. These men stande to their fastinges, holydayes, almesses, Rosaries, lyings on the grounde, Mattens, Monkes, and friers, Cowles, herclothes, shauings, pilgrimages, and an infinite number of such like, wherein they both waste and weare their bodies, and spende much money. These also are the enemies of Christ. For they see that if we admit Christ, all their righteousness falleth to the grounde, and that they are to be laughed at, which wearie and toyle themselue with such traueyle, and are at so great cost and charge in vaine. The thirde sort are openly wicked, and hogges of Epicures hearde, which onely professe a name of religion, because they would not be taken for prophane and godlesse people. These men cannot abide the worde of God, because it reprocueth their sinne, and wickednesse, as Christ sometime sayde. For they perceyue that they must eyther chaunge their maners, or else go for naughtie packes amongst all that are godly. Yet can all the sort of them craftily dissemble their corrupt nature, and will not seeme to breake their owne quarrell, they defame the doctrine of Christ, of bproze and sedition, saying, it is cause of all trouble, miserie, and calamitie. It is well knowne howe Achab sayd that Elias disturbed the whole Realme of Israell. It is well knowne howe Amasias the Priest of Bethel said that Amos the Prophete conspired against the king, and that the countrie coulde not abide his sermons. Wherevnto also may be referred what the Jewes in Egypt charged Ieremy with, to his face, as we reade in the. xliij. Chapter of his booke. And it shall appeare hereafter that this people had none other pretence in the. v. Chapter. Nay, woulde God they were content to doe but as the worlde in time past did, and woulde not shewe a worse nature in these dayes. It is good for vs to know these things, that it seeme no straunge matter vnto vs, when we heare how

Christes wholesome doctrine is forbidden. Let vs followe the constancie of the Apostles, whereof shall be spoken in the next Sermon, that when we haue ouercome the menaces and attemptes of the worlde, we may attaine to true saluation in Iesus Christ: to whome be blessing, honour, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.xxix.Homelie.

B V T Peter and Iohn answered and sayde vnto them: whether it be right in the sight of God to harken vnto you more than to God, iudge you. For we cannot but speake that which we haue seene and hearde. So threatened they them, and let them go, and founde nothing howe to punishe them, bicause of the people. For all men praysed God bicause of that which was done. For the man was aboute fourtie yeare olde on whom this myracle of healing was shewed. As soone as they were let go, they came to their fellowes, and shewed all that the high Priestes and Elders had sayde.



Christ Iesus our Sauour not without a cause, doth oftentimes preach of persecutions and afflictions before his Apostles, saying they would alwayes follow his disciples. And the ende of these admonitions is not, by feare to drine them from the faith, but his purpose is lyke a faithfull Captaine, to arme vs with faith and patience against daungers foresene. For the which cause he promisseth vs present ayde, and sayth, we shall ouercome all the perils and attemptes of our enemies. The first trouble the Apostles were in, doth euidentlye shewe vs an example of the same, which is therefore the more diligently to be considered, bicause both so faithfull a defence of Christ succouring his beloued in their distresse, doth comfort vs, and the example of the Apostles admonisheth vs of our dutie, being in like case and daunger. We haue hearde how all they that were of any power or authoritie among the Iewes, conspired against the Apostles: through whose tyranny, first they were cast in prison, then were they called before a counsell to giue an account of their faith and doctrine before most wicked Iudges: yet the truth ouercommeth, and that in such wyse that they are all amazed and wote not what to do, hauing not long before, promised themselues the conquest and victorie. And they perceiue there is no waye left them, but by threates to discourage the constancie of the Apostles: wherefore, they commaunde them, that from thenceforth they make no more mention of Iesus Christ, nor preache his doctrine anye more. This is the continuall vsage of the worlde, to oppresse the preaching of the Gospell, both with publike proclamation and open force. But with what constancie of minde, Christian people ought to withstande their threates, and enterprises, the happy ende of this tragedie which Luke now declareth, teacheth vs: euery part whereof must be the diligentlyer discussed, that we may receyue the more consolation and instruction thereby.

The Apostles aunswere is here first to be placed, who plainly testifie that they neyther can nor ought to obey their commaundements. Yet least they should seeme frowarde, impudent, or rashe, they alleage such reasons

i. The Apostles refuse to obey the Counsels decreed.

Mar. 16.

Actes. 1.

Prou. 6.

The right trade
of obedience.

as no man coulde easlye disallowe or disproue. The first standeth vpon the authoritie of God, which is greater than ought to yelde to any mannes commaundement, be he neuer so excellent. The Argument is on this wise: God must be more obeyed than men. But God commaunded vs to preach, and the commaundement of the sonne of God is: Go yee into all the worlde, and preach the Gospell to all creatures. Againe: you shall be witnesses vnto me at Hierusalem, and in all Iurie. Wherefore we may not obey you, commaunding the contrary. The Maior they proue by a figure called concession or graunting, leauing the matter to their owne iudgement, as men are wont, in such thinges as are cleare and out of controuersie. And surely it were an impietie more than deuillish, for any man to challenge to himselfe, more authoritie and reuerence, than is due vnto God, bicause it is euident, that he is not only Lord of priuate persons, but also of Kings and Princes, to whom we are all bound by publike sacraments. The other reason of the Apostles, is on this wise: we haue seene and heard all those things that wee teach: Ergo, we may not keepe them in silence, but disclose them. The force of this consequence standeth in this point, for that they were not chosen & appoynted to be ydle beholders of the things that Christ did, but for witnesses as y^e Lord saith: Iohn. 15. Therefore they might not conceale any of the things which they had seene and hearde, vnlesse they would incurre the daunger of false testimonie, the which Salomon saith, God doth chiefly detest. Furthermore, bicause the redemption and saluation of man consisteth in those things which were committed to the Apostles, as witnesses, that salve the same to be preached: they might not suppress or keepe close any of them, without the manifest detriment and losse of publike saluation, and Christes glory. For, as much as in them had bene, they shoulde haue suppressed by silence, the glory of Christ, and hindered the saluation of many a man, which by preaching of the Gospell, they might haue wonne vnto God. Therefore Peter reasoneth truly, and his arguments ought to haue bene of great force and weight with the Iudges, if they had not openly striuen against God, as afterward Gamaliel plainely telleth them.

This aunswere of the Apostles is verie notable. For first it declareth the right trade of obedience, wherein men vse diuersly and daungerously to erre. For as all men vnderstande, that obedience is necessary, both publicly, in common weales and in the Church, and priuately in all affaires: so for the most part, it is most rigorously exacted, in the decrees and constitutions of men, which is manye times the fountaine of most errorrs and wickednesse. For hereof it cometh to passe, that Princes and Magistrates dare by their proclamations commaunde menne to forsake the fayth of Christ, to denie the truth, and to embrace superstition & ydolatrie, and many for this cause, the easlier obey their commaundements, for that they thinke they owe them this obedience, and are out of all fault if they obey them. Of this fountaine it springeth, that children contract mariage with the unbelieuing, and so iourne and dwell with them, bicause they will not seme to disobey their parents. And some deceyued with the same error, holde fast their professed Monkerie, and superstitiousnesse, wherevnto they bounde themselves by bove of obedience. But Peter aunswereth all these, squaring obedience after the iudgement of God: whether it be right in the sight of God to harcken vnto you more than to God, iudge yee. Therefore we must not

so much consider what sameth right and good vnto men, as what God requireth of vs. To him we sayde erewhile, all men were bounde by the sacraments. The Magistrate is his minister, as Paule teacheth. He is in the Scripture called a Judge, and the President of all iudgement. To him shall our parents one day giue a reckoning, and as many as haue the rule and authoritie ouer vs. Therefore we must haue a singuler regarde vnto him, and thinke no mannes authoritie, so great, that we let our selues be drawne thereby from the obedience we owe vnto him. Herevnto appertaineth that saying of Christ, which so teacheth vs to pay vnto Cesar the things that belong vnto him, that we also giue vnto God that which is due vnto him. True faith, sincere and sounde religion, studie of innocencie, and charitie, inuocation, and such like, belong vnto God. Let vs not suffer these things to be taken from vs by any commaundement of man, whereby to shew our selues lesse obedient vnto God. Daniels fellowes through the consideration hereof, refused to obey Nabuchodonozers proclamation, wherein he commaunded an ymage to be worshipped, against the commaundement of God. And Daniel constantly helde on, in calling vpon the true God, against the kings proclamation. God allowed and approued their obedience with rare and singular myracles. There are infinite like examples in the Martyres, whome euery man must confesse to haue bene berye soles, if Princes proclamations and commaundementes might haue prescribed Gods preceptes. The same ought we to obserue in the duties we owe to our parentes, as we are taught by the example of Christ, who being chydren of his mother bicause he taried in the Citie without the knowledge of his an d Ioseph, answered: Wyft you not that I must be aboute my fathers businesse? The religion of Monkische bowes is most foolish, and causeth the obseruers of them to commit double offence. For while they bowe those things which partly they are not able to perfourme, and partly are contrary to the expresse commaundements of God, they doe grieuouly sinne. And that done, bicause they would be taken for very religious persons, they obstinately holde on in the things they haue vngodly and foolishly bowed, albeit they be taught a better waye, being lyke vnto Herode, who bicause he wolde not seeme periured, ioyned murther vnto his vnauided oth. Therefore the safest waye is, that we remember what dutie we owe vnto God, and promise, nor doe nothing for any mannes sake, that shall be against the same. And if any thing escape vs vnawares, to acknowledge our fault, and not to perforce our promises with more wickednesse, than we made them. And if any shall be founde so insolent and proude that will haue their authoritie to be taken greater than Gods, to set our selues against their impietie with an holy and godlye boldenesse, as we see in this place Peter and Iohn did.

Also the Apostles aunswere teacheth vs, with what argumentes, the Ministers of the Gospell must arme themselves against the assaultes of the worlde. For we haue sayde before, how the worlde will alwayes hinder the preaching of the Gospell, and daylie experience teacheth it. Therefore first they must consider, that it is Gods commaundement the gospell should be preached, & that the ministerie of this preaching, belongeth to them, for that they are called and sent of God about this businesse. Therefore it should be a token of wicked and vngodly temeritie, to denye God their seruice,

Rom. 13.
Psal. 82.

Math. 22.

Dan. 3.6.

Luc. 2.

Amos. 3.

1. Cor. 9.

Math. 25.

2. The Apo-
stles are let
go free.The Apo-
stles are let
go for feare
of the people

as Amos well sawe, which sayde to the people of his dayes that liked not his propheticall rebukes: When a Lyon roareth, who will not bee afraide? Seeing then the Lorde God himselfe speaketh, who will not prophesie? For he sawe howe unhappily it succeeded with Jonas when he would haue shunned the office of preaching to the Niniuites. Therefore Paule cryeth out: woe to me, if I preach not the Gospell. Agayne, let them consider howe the testimonie of truth is committed to them, and of that truth which concerneth the chiefe glory of Christ, and the saluation of mankind. Therefore if they conceale anye thing for fauour of men, it can not be but they must committe treason against God, and be accounted the publike enemies of mankind. Finally, let them remember howe they shall one day come before Christ the Judge, who will not onely punish eternally the false embassers and corrupters of the talent committed to them, but also them that hide their talent, and labour not as much as in them is, to winne men vnto Christ. These things must we set against the vaine terrores of the world, and then shall we not much passe for them, which neyther will haue the waye of saluation plainly taught, nor false Christians, to be reprimanded, nor open malefactors to be accused.

Howbeit, this is much to be marueyled at, that Luke wyrteth the Apostles were let go, when they had openly refused to obey them, considering there remayned still in the Judges an obstinate will, to persecute the Gospell. For least any man might thinke the Councell yielded to their reasons, he saith: They threatned them, and let them go. These things expresse the condicions of the wicked, and the great hatred they beare to the truth, wherewith being blinded, they can neyther giue place to anye reason, nor yet feare the iudgement of God. Neyer have they any thing to answer Peters arguments. And yet they threaten still. And other colour of their doing haue they none, but that they thinke the Apostles unworthy, with whome to haue any long disputation. In the meane time, this example teacheth vs, that the faithfull so overcome not, that they enioye long anye rest or quiet, in this worlde. For the worlde continually breatheth oute threats, and the enemies of truth once overcome, are still prouoking to the fight. So Elias, although he had overcome the Priestes of Baal in Carmele, both by his doctrine, and myracle shewed by God, and had put them to death: yet Iesabel the Quene prepareth freshe persecution, and entrappings against him. Therefore let the souldiours of Christ, neuer giue them to carelesnesse, although they perceiue they haue overcome their enemies, but let them remember their triumph must be vnder the Crosse, vntill they be deliuered out of the pryson of the fleshe, and shall raigne with Christ in Heauen, where they shall haue no occasion, to feare Tyrantes any more.

But some man may marueyle, how the Apostles are let go free, from their most cruell enemies, considering their great power and authoritie. Luke therefore declareth the cause hereof, saying. They founde no way to punish them, bycause of the people. For all men prayfed God, bycause of that which was done. For the man was aboue fourtie yere olde, on whome this Myracle of healing was wrought. Here is the marueylous power of God to be considered, who so easily can brydle the wicked. They were of suche power and authoritie before, that they were onely taken for Lordes and Rulers, and stood in aboe of no mans power. But lo, they are afraide of the

the people and coystrell Commones. So God which hath set the flytting and rolling sande for lymites and boundes against the sea, a most raging element, which the sea can not passe, except he permit it: doth set most times the people, the vnconstantest thing that is, against most mightie tyrants, or else byydleth them by other vnaccustomed and vnlooked for meanes: so that they are not able to doe that against the weake & succorlesse people, which they most gladly woulde, and seemeth most easily to be done. So he sometime defended the Patriarches in the middelt of the lande of Chanaan, putting a certaine secret feare in the mindes of the Chananites. So he wythhelde Saul from persecuting of Dauid, by the Philisteanes, and through theyr helpe defended Dauid, being his greatest enimies. And now through feare of the people, keepeth the Priestes, that they lay not handes on the Apostles, which people befoze that, with a sauage & bethleem shoute required to haue Christ most shamefully crucified. There are infinite lyke examles, which teach vs that Tyrantes cannot allwaye doe what they list. These serue to encourage vs, that we be not afrayde at the vaine threates of the worlde, but to follow our vocation boldly, and not to doubt of Gods defence, and ayde, who hauing nombred the heares of our heade, will suffer nothing to happen vnto vs, without his good prouidence, and pleasure. He defendeth those that be his in the middle of Babylon, and Egypt, as long as he seeth they serue to set fourth his glorie, and to bring other into the way of saluation. And when they haue finished their course, he calleth them vnto him. And although it may then seeme the wicked haue some power vpon them: yet is it none other, but that they ryd the godly out of this myserable dungeon of the flesh, whereas they themselues in the meane season fill vp the measure of their iniquitie, and be receiued into Hell among them which brought feare into the lande of the lyuing.

Furthermoze, we may behold the state and condicion that tyrants are in, when they seeme to be of most power and authoritie: that is to say, how while they go about to put many in feare they stande in feare of many. The same cometh to passe in them, that we see fall out among cruell beasts, such as are Beares, Lions, Panthers, & other like. These beasts are fierce against all they meete with, & are feared of all men. Yet men make taltrops, digge pits for them, and make engines to kill them: wherby it cometh to passe many times that that beast, which not long befoze, made an whole country afraid, is killed by the hande of some one man, the most cowardde, and fearefullest of al other men. Tyrants many times find, it so cometh to passe by them, and therefore they are still vexed wyth the preposterous feare, and dread of the people, and going about to make all men afrayde, liue in feare of them that are nearest about them, as Luke in this place saith these men did. Hence procede those exquisite gardes that Tyrantes haue about them for preservation of their bodie, and lyfe. For this cause most times they wage souldiours, and armed men out of straunge Countries, and promyse themselves, more safety in the defence of straungers, than in their owne countrymen: bicause among straungers, they thinke there be none, that hope for any gaine by their death. For this cause Masinissa King of Numidia, being both in amitie and league with the people of Rome, and hauing foure and fiftie children, garded his bodie with mastiues, and bande dogs, reposing in them a moze sure succour and defence, than in men, whome he knewe hee had

Gene.35.

Psal.105.

1.Sam.23.

Math.10.

Ezech.32.

The state
and condicion
of Tyrants.

Rooke Valer.
Max. ix. booke,
and. 14. chap.

had many times offended. What shall we say of Dionysius, which caused his daughters to learne the Barbers craft, bycause he would not commit his throte to the handes of men. And after his daughters were mariageable, would trust them no longer, nor neuer would company wyth any of his wyues, before they were diligently searched and ransaked. But Histories be full of these examples, which may both comfort vs against tyrantes, and teach all men that be in authoritie, to doe iustlye and truely, and not to thinke their lyfe safe, through vnbydeled authoritie. For the more they make afrayde, the more they prouoke to lye in wayte for their goodes and lyues. And whosoever be ledde wyth the feare of God, and thinke to follow his commaundements, and moderate their authoritie and power, after the same, although sometimes the wicked craftily laye wayte for them, yet shall they perceyue that God defendeth them, who can easily scatter the deuysses of all that are seditious, as we are taught by the examples of Dauid, and Ezechias.

3. The Apostles declare all the matter to the congregation.

Iohn. 10.

Last of all, Luke telleth what the Apostles did after they were let gone, saying: They came vnto their fellowes and shewed them all that the highe Priestes and Elders had sayde. So they declare all the matter to the congregation, both for that they would moue them to prayer, as the things following declare, and also, that perceyuing the threates and attemptes of their enemies, they might all arme themselves with a christian valiantnesse and patience, and as farre as they might without prejudice of religion, take heede of their gins and snares. By which example we are taught, that it is lawfull for Ministers of the Church to declare openly to the congregation whatsoeuer the professed enemies of the truth take in hande agaynst Christ and his flocke. Which thing manye nowe a dayes thinke not onely superfluous, but also to haue in it some likelyhoode of sedition, when eyther the Popes Bulles, or the decrees of Synodes and Counsailes, and horrible threates of Antychrist, are recited before the Congregation. But by these mennes iudgement, both Christ and his Apostles shall be accused of sedition, who, it is euident many times thus did. Let vs rather remember that the Ministers of the Church are appointed to be shepheardes and watchmen. It is therefore their dutie to rebuke Wolues, and to warne the sheepe of daungers at hande. The ende of all these things is, that the faithfull shoulde turne vnto God by prayers, and amendement of lyfe, and be armed with Christian fortitude, and constancie of fayth, that when we haue ouercome all the attemptes of our enemies, we may be taken at length into the blessed kingdome of Jesus Christ: to whome be praise, honoz, power and glozy for euer. Amen.

The. xxx. Homelie.

AND when they hearde that, they lift vp their voyces to God with one accorde and sayde: Lorde thou art God which hast made heauen and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, which by the mouth of thy seruauant Dauid hast sayde: why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vaine things? The kinges of the earth stooode vp, and the Rulers came together against the Lorde, and against his annoynted: for of a truth against thy holy childe Iesus,

Iesus, whom thou hast annoynted, both Herode, and also Pontius Pylate, with the Gentyles & the people of Israel, gathered themselues together, to do whatsoever thy hande and thy counsell determined before to be done. And nowe Lorde, beholde their threatenings, and graunt vnto thy seruantes that with all confidence they may speake thy worde. So that thou stretch forth thine hande, that healing, and signes, and woonders bee done by the name of thy holy chyld Iesus. And as soone as they had prayed, the place moued where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the holy ghoft.



As our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ doth oftentimes make mention of the persecutions of the godly: so the holy ghost woulde haue Luke diligently to set forth the persecutions of the primitive Church, not only for to maintaine the truth of Christes sayings, but partly for that we shoulde not be offended at the aduersitie and tribulation wherewith the church is now a dayes troubled, as at a straunge and vnboughted thing, and partly for that we shoulde

be instructed with the example of the primitive Church, what to doe in time of persecutions. And to this ende principally, are all those things to be applied, which hitherto haue bene sayde of the Apostles. They being brought before the counsaile, doe plainly and boldly confesse Christ. Then when the enemies had forbidden them to preach the Gospell, they protest with marueylous constancie, that they can not obey so wicked a commaundement. At length when they perceyue that reason coulde not preuaile with these wicked Counsaylers, but that they were still threatened, they declare all the matter to the congregation, to the end that ech one being admonished of the daunger ensuing, might the more easily prouide for themselves. These proceedings let the Ministers imitate, as often as they perceyue the world raise stormes of persecutions against them. Let their stout and bolde confession of Christ be an example vnto others. Let them not yelde to the wicked commaundements of Princes. Let them faithfully premonish the congregation, least any mannes saluation stande in perill, through their sloth. Luke proceedeth on in his hystorie, and sheweth what the Church doth, being thus admonished by the Apostles. By which example, it maye appeare what euery Christian hath to doe, both particulerly and in generall, when persecutions are stirring.

They (sayth he) when they hearde the Apostles, lift vp their voyce to God with one accorde. And he telleth of the Church, howe they sought the succour and helpe of God only by prayer. They were not carelesse therefore, nor did not set light, the daungers approaching. Neither fledde they to mans wisdom, helpe, or counsaile, but sought all maner of ayde and succour by prayers. This is the sure sanctuarie of the Church, bicause God euerywhere promiseth to be their defender that seeke their helpe of him. And that which he euerywhere promiseth, he hath by infinite examples perfourmed, so that none that is a true Christian can doubt of the truth of his promises. To this may be ioyned howe he deliuered the Israelites, environned with the hoste of the Egyptians, at Moyse entreatie and prayers. And after that, through the prayers of the same Moyse, he gaue them victorie ouer the Amalechites.

The Church
fleeth to God
by prayer.

Exod. 14.

Exod. 17.

Ioel. 2.

Amalechites. In the Psalmes there are infinit examples of them, which testify how God hath bene favourable and gracious vnto their prayers. Yea, Ioel the Prophete giueth this only counsell to the Church in distresse, that they shoulde all turne vnto God, and call vpon him for helpe, prescribing also such a forme of prayers as they shoulde openly vse. And that his counsayle was not in vaine, the successe of the matter proued. For God sent his Angel which in one night slewe the hoste of the Assirians, and deliuered the citie of Jerusalem from the great tyrannie of Sennacharib. Wherefore the primitive Church coulde not doe better than to sue vnto God by praier, as they did. The corrupt condicions and maners of our dayes are by this example reproued. For we see many with ouermuch carelesnesse contemne the daungers hanging ouer the Church, scoffe and deride all admonitions, and wholly giue themselves to all vntimely pleasures and exercises. But when they feele the fire of persecution burning, either they followe the counsell of the fleshe, dissembling their fayth, or else fortifye themselves in the league of Princes, and helpe of man. Which is the cause that the more they seeke to be out of daunger, the more grievously they entangle and endaunger themselves.

The true
trade of pray-
ing.

Psal. 12. 56.

Luke also in fewe wordes comprehendeth the right trade and order of praying. First, they call vpon God, who is onely to be inuocated, as appeareth both by the couenant made with Abraham, by the first commandement in the Decalogue, and by the order of the Lordes prayer. And it is manifest by many examples, that he only heareth vs euerywhere, and can deliuer vs. Wherefore, great & heinous is their error whosoener they be that make their prayers vnto Creatures. Then they lift vp their voice and pray. And yet is it plaine that God heareth euen the groning onely of them that are afflicted, and their teares continually are in his sight. Notobest, they woulde expresse the sinceritie of their fayth, by lifting vp their voyce, and testifye that they were not ashamed of their prayers, and calling vpon God for helpe. For this is not the least poynt of the confession of our fayth, as we may perceyue Daniel well iudged, who hauing before prayed in secret, when he perceyued the King had commaunded God shoulde not be inuocated, setteth open his windowes, and prayeth, as it were, in the sight of all men, bicause he woulde not seeme to like or allowe the wicked proclamation. Last of all, he attributeth vnanimitie or concord vnto them, which thing, except the Church obserue, neyther shall their prayers be hearde, ne yet their selues be taken for the Church of God. For the Church being made one body vnder one head, which is Christ, is quickened with one selfe spirite, calleth vpon one and the same father, and hath one and the same inheritance layde vp for them in heauen. And they that in these things agree, cannot in their mindes be deuied. Therefore let vs followe the trade of praying used in the primitive Church, and we shall perceyue in our aduersities that Gods helpe will be most neare at hande. It shall be good to consider diligently the prayer that they made, which may be deuied into thre partes.

1. They describe
God of
his omnipotencie.

The first conteyneth a description of God, wherein they acknowledge him for the creator of the whole worlde. They make mention first of the creation, that men might consider the omnipotencie of God, and his singular power ouer all creatures, whereby they might conceyue the greater

conso-

consolation. For thus they were aduertised that the wicked enemies of Christ neyther coulde hinder the worke of God by their enterprises, nor yet hurt them in any thing, without the deuise and sufferance of God. It behoueth vs likewise to haue a consideration of Gods omnipotencie, that we acknowledge him not only for the creator, but also for the gouernour and preseruer of all creatures, who though he hath set his throne on high, yet hee humbleth himselfe to beholde whatsoeuer is done, eyther in heauen or in earth. Which consideration as it is very profitable for the amendement of our life and maners: so in tribulations it bringeth comfort, and in our prayers chiefly confirmeth our faith, wherebpon the effect of prayer principally dependeth. And this is the chiefe vse of the first Article in the Apostles Crede, where we professe we beleue in God the Father, maker of heauen and earth. For it maketh for the confirmation of our faith, and taketh awaye all cause of distrust, which commonlye springeth by reason we thinke God eyther cannot or will not helpe vs. But what is impossible vnto him which hath made heauen and earth by his worde, and hath hyther to preserued all this worlde: Or is it like he will neglect men, whom he hath made Lords ouer all the things he hath created, which hath respect vnto things boyde of lyfe, and seeth them gouerned?

The seconde part contayneth the narration, wherein they shewe vnto God, the attemptes of their enemies, and the present daungers that they be in, not that they thinke God is ignorant of them, but for that they would somewhat ease their mindes of care and grieffe, by laying their complaints before Gods eyes, which thing was the chiefe cause of these complaintes, which the Saintes vsed to intermeddle among their prayers. Here maye we perceiue the goodnesse of God, whose eares be so easily opened to our complaintes, and heareth vs so mercifully when we complaine of our miseries and distresse. They take the beginning of their narration out of the seconde Psalm, where Dauid inspired by the holy ghost, described the kingdome of Christ, and also the wicked enterprises of the worlde which fight against his kingdome. The sense of all their sayinge is thus. We finde it nowe true (O God) that thou once didst prophesie by the mouth of thy seruant Dauid. For truly, in this Citie of Ierusalem, which in tynes past was called both holy, and the seate of righteousnesse, Herode and Pylate haue conspired together against thy sonne, the souldiers also of the Gentyles, haue gathered themselues together, and the people of Israel which ought to haue serued thee. And it is not for naught that they recyte this olde prophesie. For hereby they declare that there is no straunge and vnwonted thing come to passe, and that therefore no man ought to be offended, with the wicked attemptes of Christes enemies. We are taught by their example, howe we also shoulde call to remembrance the prophesies of the scripture, when we be tossed with the tempests of persecution, and specially those where Christ testifieth, there shall be perpetuall enmitie betwene the worlde and those that be his. If you were of the worlde (sayeth he) the worlde woulde loue his owne. But nowe haue I chosen you out of the worlde, and therefore the worlde hateth you. And Paule sayth, Persecution shall followe all them that will liue godly in Christ Iesus. Wherevnto chiefly belongeth that which God prophesied in the first beginning of the worlde, that there shoulde be perpetuall enmitie betwene the Serpent and the seede of

Psal. 113.

Iacob. 1.
Math. 21.1. The narra-
tion.

Iohn. 15. 16.

2. Timo. 3.

1. Pet. 4.

The enter-
prises of
Christes
enimies.

Psal. 94.

Psalme. 7.
Psalme. 33.

Esay. 8.

In the tri-
partite histo-
rie. vi. booke,
c. xlii. chap.Christes eni-
mies warre
with God.

the woman, that is, betwene the deuill the Prince of this worlde, and Christ, who also includeth the Church, which is his body. The consideration of these things maketh vs not to be offended at persecutions, forasmuch as we see it is so ordeyned of God, that the godly shall be tryed, as it were by fire, with the rage and furie of the world. Herevnto appertaineth that saying of Peter: Dearly beloved, marueyle not that you are proued by fire, (which thing is to trie you) as though some straunge thing happened vnto you, but reioyce, in as much as yee are partakers of Christes passions. &c. But it becometh vs somewhat more diligentely to marke, howe the holye ghost speaketh of the enterprises of Christes enimies, both by Dauid, and also by the congregation of the faithfull.

First he describeth their enterprises, saying: they rage, they ymagine, they stande vp and take counsaile togyther. These things expresse an ardent and earnest hatred against Christ and his kingdome, which they seeke by all meanes to ouerthrow. And he trimly describeth the maners and conditions of them. For where he numbryth Nations, People, and Kinges among the enimies of Christ, he attributeth to each of them their peculiar properties. The vnbelauing Gentiles rage, as who are ledde rather with furiousnesse of affections, than with counsaile. The people (whereby is vnderstanded the communaltie) ymagine or speake thyngs that be bayne, whyle amonges their Cuppes commonly they talke of ouerthrowing the kingdome of Christ. But Kinges and Princes, tossed with the care of their kingdomes, ryle vp, ioyne togyther, and openly take counsaile, by what force and polycie, Christ may be oppressed. And yet (he sayth) they altogether take in hande, and muse vpon things that are but bayne. For what are mortall men, whose thoughtes and cogitations are but bayne, able to doe against the Lorde? They are conceyued with vexation, they traueyle with vanitie, and bring forth lying. And God whose counsaile endureth for euer, doth easily bring the counsaile of the heathen to naught. Hereto belongeth the saying of the godly in the Prophet: Breake downe (o you people) and you shall be broken downe. Muster you, and you shall be broken downe: Prepare you to battaile, and you shall be torne in peeces: take your counsaile togyther, yet must your counsaile come to naught: goe in hande wyth all, yet shall it not prosper, for the Lorde is with vs.

They that reade the Scriptures, and stories of the Church, may see euerywhere examples hereof, so that it needeth not greatly to make rehearsall of the same: yet is that one example of Iulian the Apostata or runagate most notable, who burning in hatred against Christ, & ready to giue vp his ghost, was constrained to say. Thou hast the victorie o Galylean, thou hast the victorie. So that a certaine Christian very wittily answered a wicked Sophister, asking him what the Carpenter of Galyley did: that he was making a Coffin, or Bære to beare Iulian to his Graue vpon.

Afterwarde, he sheweth against whome these enterprises are made: They came togyther against the Lorde, and against his annoynted. It myght haue seemed a light matter to contende or strue wyth Christ, by reason of his humble, and lowly porte of mannes nature which he tooke on him. But they are not Christes enimies onely, but also enimies of God. For as he which disdayneth to acknowledge the Kinges onely sonne, to be the heyre and King of the Realme, and is a procurer of sedition against him, is wor-
thyly

thily iudged to make warre against the king : so he that will not acknowledge the sonne God to be our king and sauour, may well be sayde to be the enimie of God, who hath giuen to him only all the power of his kingdome, and all the glory of mans redemption, that all men might honoz the sonne, euen as they honoz the Father . Neyther can God be acknowledged and honoured otherwyse, than in his sonne . Wherefore of consequence, they neyther acknowledge, nor honour God, which doe not acknowledge and honour his sonne. And if they rebell, and moue warre against the sonne of God, then like the wicked Gyaunts, they may be iudged to make warre against God also . This did John the Baptist well perceyue, when he sayde. The Father loueth the Sonne, and hath gyuen all things into his hande. He that beleueth in the Sonne, hath lyfe euerlasting . He that beleueth not the Sonne, shall not see lyfe, but the wrath of God abydeth vpon him . And who can doubt, but he is the enimie of God, that prouoketh againe himselfe the irrenocable wrath of God? These things serue both for our instruction, that we defyle not our selues wyth lyke impietie, and also for our comforte, that we be not afrayd with the power of our enemies, when we see our selues to weake for them . For this is not our fight, but a battell taken in hande vnder Gods conduct, who can most easilye subdue their force and attemptes. Which thing Iohn teacheth vs when he sayth, that he that is in vs, is of more power, than he that is in the worlde.

Iohn. 5.

Iohn. 3.

1. Iohn. 4.

The enemies
of Christ, ful-
fill the will
of God.

Last of all, the faithfull expresse more evidently the effect and ende of these mischieuous attempts, where they say : They gathered themselves together, to doe whatsoeuer thy hande and thy counsaile determined before to be done . Howbeit, the wicked consult not, nor meete not together, to put Gods will and purpose in execution : but they declare vnto vs, how they are able to doe nothing, but that which God hath decreed to haue done, and that then they most further Gods purpose, when they most studie to hinder it . This shall appeare to be manifest, if we consider, what the Priestes of the Jewes dyd . They woulde keepe Christ oute of his kingdome . Therefore they moued the Romane Presidents, and communalitie against him, and syn-
ted not, vntill they sawe him vpon the Crosse, dead, and buried. But what other did they in all these things, but helpe Christ being the Sauour of the worlde, according to the eternall purpose of his Father, to enter into his kingdome . And by the consideration hercof, the Apostles remoue out of the way, that blocke whereat such stumble as thinke the wicked are able to ouercome Christ by power and force . Here serueth the vse of Gods singu-
ler prouidence, to make men vnderstande, that the enterprises of the wye-
ked can go no further, nor doe no more, than God hath appoynted . Here haue we to obserue, that they acknowledge in Gods prouidence, not one-
ly his prescience and foreknowledge, but also his stable decree, and hande, whereby he doth execute at his pleasure, that which he hath decreed, that himselfe may be all in all. And yet the wicked are not therfore excused, because they respect not the decree and will of God, but followe their owne corrupt affections, as we haue already many times declared . And although the primitive Church, doth truely beleue and professe the same, yet she pray-
eth, and with feruent suite beseecheth God of his succour and ayde . There-
fore the doctrine, that submitteth all things, and the successe of them vnto God, taketh not praying away : For God will be prayed to, and inuocated.

Ii. ij.

And

And for this cause, the godly vse it the more ardently, for that they knowe all thinges are gouerned by his appoyntment. For they doe that which he commaundeth, and they search not ouer curiously after his secret counsell, but permit the successe of all thinges vnto him, whome they knowe to be faithfull, who will not suffer vs to be tempted aboue our strength, and bringeth all thinges to an happy ende, for all them that loue him.

3. The pray-
ers of them
that beleued.

Psal. 7. 17.
26. and o-
thers.

Esay. 37.

Ephes. 6.

Luke. 17.
Mar. 16.
Iohn. 14.

Nowe let vs see the thirde part of this prayer, which containeth the petitions of those thinges, which they perceyued then they had most neede of. The first of them is: And now Lorde, beholde their threatnings. By this worde beholde, they meane iudgement and punishment, and it is as much to saye, as if they should desyre God to reuenge theyr cause. For who had more right to reuenge him than he, for as much as agaynst him this warre was made, as they had proued by the wordes of the Psalme: Thys is the peculiar blage of the godly, that when they perceyue they are hyndered in their vocation, or not able to make their parte good, to appeale vnto the iudgement of God, as we see Dauid oftentymes dyd, when Saule persecuted hym, yet shall we neuer doe it wyth more affyaunce, than when the glozy of God by the wycked is openly impeached. Thus Ezechias layde the blasphemous letter of the king of Assyria, open before the Lorde, and beseecheth hym, that he wyll defende hys quarrell. And it is no doubt, but he heareth them which be carefull for the glozie of his name, seeing he so mercifully heareth the pryuate quarrels of those that be hys. But to the ende they woulde not seeme so to comynyt thys matter vnto God, as to withdrawe themselves out of all daunger, they beseeche God also, to gyue them such grace, that they maye speake and declare his worde boldly, which thing chiefly is to be vnderstanded of the Apostles, and other Ministers of the worde, who vnlesse they be boldened and guyded wyth the spirite of God, may easily be made afrayde with the threats and assaultes of the worlde, to intermyt their office. Which thing Paule, after hys manifolde traueyles in the ministerie acknowledged, and therefore thought good to be holpen wyth the publike prayers of the congregations, that he might speake the worde of God frely and with open mouth. Yet is thys also to be referred to euery singuler chrystian, and it behoueth to pray for euery particuler person, that they may confesse Christ boldly and stowtely, before thys naughtie and adulterous worlde. It is necessarie, that we vnderstand how this boldenesse is gyuen vs of God. For so shall we be prouoked, to pray oftentymes, for the increase of fayth, crying with the Apostles: Lorde increase our fayth. Thirde, they require that the power of working myracles may be increased, bycause God hath appoynted them as certayne publike seales and testimonials to the Apostles doctrine. And they desyre the same may be done by the name of Christ, to declare that theyr care is onely for Chrystes glozie. In thys place there shyneth a marueylous stoutenesse, and most ardent zeale towardes Christ, in the primitive Church. They perceyued a little before, that the mindes of the Jewes were incensed with the doctrine and myracles of the Apostles, yet desyre they that the Apostles may haue more boldenesse graunted them, and their gistes of myracles to be increased: so little place doe they gyue to their enemies furie, though but for a season, which yet the men in our dayes wyll doe, who thinke that to be the best trade of teaching, that most pleaseeth the professed enymies of truth,

truth, and seeke nothing but ydlenesse, and the peace of the worlde, being little or nothing carefull for the increase of Christes kingdome. These men thinke the Ministers are to feruent, and manye tymes also those that be scarce luke warme, which seemeth to me is the chiefe cause, that Christes kingdome is so little enlarged amongst vs.

To conclude, Luke sheweth what effect ensued of their praying. For God heard their prayers, which was declared both by a sensible signe, that is to saye, by the mouing of the house (which signified the presence of God) and also by most wholesome effectes. For they were filled with the holye ghost, that is to say, they perceyued an effectuall comfort of the holye ghost, and courage giuen them, where before this, the feare of daunger did somewhat dismay them. And they to whome the ministerie of the Gospell was committed, preached the same with great constancie: so that a man might iudge them rather kindled and enflamed with the threats of their enemies, than made afrayde. Whereof more shall be sayde in the next Sermon. We are taught by this example, that God neglecteth not the praiers of the godlye, but that his eyes be fixed vpon the iust, and his eares open vnto their prayers. Let vs follow the example of the primitive Church in these dayes, where most cruell enemies euerywhere conspire together against the truth, and turning our selues vnto God by prayer, let vs commit our whole cause vnto him: let vs beseech him of increase of fayth, and the holye ghost, that we be not ouercome with any dangers or terrores, but that after we haue happily ended the course of our life, we may be receyued into his heavenly kingdome, there to liue with Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honour, power and glory for euer. Amen.

The prayers
of the godly
are heard.

Psal. 34.

The. xxxj. Homelie.

AND they spake the worde of God boldly. And the multitude of them that beleeued were of one heart, and of one soule. Neyther sayd any of them that ought of the things which he possessed, was his owne, but they had all things common. And with great power gaue the Apostles witnesse of the resurrection of the Lord Iesu. And great grace was with them all. Neyther was there any among them that lacked. For as many as were possessours of lands, or houses, solde them, and brought the price of the things that were solde, and layde it downe at the Apostles feete. And distribution was made vnto euery man according as he had neede. And Ioses which was called of the Apostles Barnabas, that is to saye, the sonne of consolation, being a Leuite, and of the countrie of Cyprus, hauing lande, solde it, and layde the price downe at the Apostles feete.



S Luke the Euangelist hath diligently described the first persecution that was rayled against the Apostles: so reporteth he as diligently, what the faithfull did during the time of these whurly burleys. The ende of all which is, that we should learne what to doe in like case. First and foremost they gaue themselves vnto prayers, which they powred out before God with one feruent accorde of minde. To God likewise must we resort in our aduersities,

1. The Apostles constantly preach the Gospel.

Iohn. 10.

Iohn. 3.

Amos. 3.
E say. 30.

2. Timo. 4.

Ezech. 33.

uersities, and not to the vaine helpe of the fleshe. And we must aske of him not such things as serue the carelesnesse and ydlenesse of the fleshe, but such as concerne the setting forth of Christs kingdome. Now let vs see the other exercises of the primitive Church, wherby it shall appeare, that they intermitted nothing that belonged to their dutie.

First, Luke speaketh of the Apostles, and all those who had the office of teaching committed to them. He sayth, they preached the worde of God with confidence, that is, boldly and freely: wherunto a little after is added: with great power gaue the Apostles witnesse of the resurrection of the Lorde Iesu. They accomplished therefore that which they protested they would doe, contrarie to the decreæ of the counsaile. Luke maketh mention only of the resurrection, not for that they only preached the same only, but bicause thereby Christ perfited and fulfilled the businesse of our redemption and saluation, and for that we shoulde not thinke the Apostles yielded any thing to the Saduceyes, which then were in greatest authoritie. And it is not without a cause that Luke maketh mention of doctrine first of all other things, for thereunto a principall care must alwayes be had. For where we are regenerate by doctrine, and by the same the Church is gathered together: without the same, the Church cannot stande in hir full strength and bigour. Neyther was it without the prompting of the holy ghost, that Salomon in tyme past sayde: When prophesying fayleth, the people go to hauock. And that this was truly sayde, the examples of all ages abundantly testifie. Wherefore, as before he sayde, the Church continued in the preaching and doctrine of the Apostles: so now also he testifieth the Apostles are most mindefull and earnest in their office. By which examples, Ministers are admonished, that they must not suffer the libertie of preaching to be taken from them, through feare of persecution, and threating of enimies, nor when daunger approcheth, cease not to ferde Christs shepe with the word of doctrine, and comfort. For that is the propertie of hyzelings, as Christ sayth, and not of those which are readie to lay downe their liues, according to the example of Christ, for the shepe committed to their charge. But bicause men are much faultie herein, it shall be profitable, diligently to discusse this example, that hereby Ministers may learne what appertaineth to them to doe. And first, bold libertie of teaching, and vnfearefull affiance of minde is attributed to the Apostles, which is necessary for all ministers, as it is plaine, bicause there will be alwayes some, that would haue them bydded and mussled. For Christ witnesseth, that the worlde cannot abide the light of the truth. The same worlde cannot abide to be aduertised and reprehended. So that there were in the olde time, which durst say vnto the Prophetes: Prophecie not to vs. Looke not out right things for vs: but speake faire wordes vnto vs: looke out errours, get you out of this waye: depart out of this path, and turne the holy one of Israell from vs. And Paule sayeth, there shall be in the later dayes, which shall not abide the worde of truth, but hauing the ytch in their eares, shal get them an heape of teachers, which shall bring doctrine agreeable to their corrupt affections. And we see it is euerywhere true, that he prophesied. Here therefore is required an Apostolike libertie, & bolde affiance of preaching, whereby Bishoppes in the Church may applie their office in season and out of season, that they maye encourage others, of whom there is yet some hope remainyng, and deliuer their owne soules, that the

blonde

bloude of them that perishe, be not required at their handes. Furthermore, it is sayd they chiefly inculcated the article of resurrection aboue all other. And in dede this was the principall and chiefe article, wherewith the chiefe of the Jewes were most offended. For through this article they were conuincd, partly of putting Christ vniustly to death, and partly the Saduceyes coulde not suffer the same to be preached, as who denied the resurrection. Yet notwithstanding, the Apostles boldly and stoutly preached the same, so that it maye appeare they had a great care of the same. This example teacheth vs, that those articles are chiefly to be vrged, which the aduersaries vse most to impugne. For all things in the ministerie of the worde must be directed to edification and profite. And the next care must be, that the thing which is edified or builded, must not fall doونه againe. But he shall perforce none of these prosperously, which most constantly resisteth not when the truth of doctrine is assaulted with the craft & tyranny of the enemies, and is mooste in hazarde. They that are set to defende Cities and Castelles, vse to bende and bring al their force to those places, where the enemies strongly assault them. Let them whome the Lorde hath appoynted gouernors and pastoꝝ of the congregation doe the like. Neyther are they to be heard which thinke those things ought to be suppressed, and not spoken of, which offende the aduersaries in our preaching. For the Lord hath appointed vs ministers of his word, & not maisters and iudges, vpon whose determination and appointment his doctrine must depende. Therfore their boldnesse is most wicked, which dare take vpon them to prescribe the holpe spirite, which is the only gouernour of the Church, and of doctrine.

Secondly, he sheweth howe the whole Church was giuen to vnitie and concord. The multitude (sayth he) were of one heart and one soule. The meaning is, that they were all of one minde and will: the ende whereof vndoubtedly was none other than the enlargement of Christes kingdome. This likenesse and parilitie of will and minde bringeth forth true friendship and stable concord. For they which haue this marke before them, to set forth the kingdome of Christ, are nothing desirous of their private lucre, which thing alone disturbeth all friendship. It shall appeare this was a singular worke of the holy ghost, if we consider that the multitude of the beleeuers, in whom this concord & consent so euidently appeared, were fyue thousand persons. This truly is the right marke and token of the faithfull, & such as they are neuer without. For they that acknowledge but one father in heauen, are receyued into one baptisme, be but one bodie vnder Christ the head, and are all quickned but with one spirit of Christ, it cannot be that they can be deuided among themselves. Therefore Christ appointed this, as a cognisaunce to knowe his by, saying: By this shall all men knowe that you are my Disciples, if you loue one another. And agayne, Paule by this argument proueth the Corinthians, as yet to be carnall, by reason of the enuie, contention, and deuision that was among them. It is worthe to be considered, how after they had hearde the threates, and wicked attemptes of their enemies, they gaue themselves so earnestly to mutuall loue and vnitie. That is the very propertie of loue, then most to shewe his effectes, when he seeth his brethren compassed about with daunger & necessitie, and to haue most neede of helpe. This example condemneth the guile of our daies, wherin men are destitute & boide of all vnitie and concord. We heare
amongst

1. Cor. 14.
2. Cor. 10.

2 The congrega-
tion giuen
to concord.

3 Cor. 12.
Ephes. 4.
Iohn. 13.

1. Cor. 3.

Galath. 5.

3. Beneuolence, and helping of the poore.

Goodes were common by will, not by lawe.

1. Timo. 6.

Psal. 62.
Math. 6.

Luke. 16.

The manner

amongest the professors of the faith and doctrine of the Gospel, the factious names of Zwinglians and Lutheranes: And so farre is this emulation spread, that where the one part is in daunger, the other forsake their brethren, and without any pittie or mercie laugh in their sleeves at them. Yea, many times, they declare their ioye by bitter tauntes, and offer the members of Christ hanging vpon the crosse, vinegar mingled with gall. To say nothing in the meane season of the contentions, raylings, bpbaydings, and slaundering one of another, that is among them. It is to be feared therfore, least while we bite one another, we be bitten and destroyed one of another. Who soeuer in their distresses will haue any ayde or helpe of God, must first be ioyned together in minde through charitie.

But least any man might thinke this ioyning of mindes stode in bare and vaine affection, he sheweth in the thirde part, howe they declared the same, by their deedes. First, he maketh mention of beneuolence and helping of the poore, the exercise wherof, they cannot omitte, whose mindes agree together in Christ. And this place is mooste woorthye to be considered, both bicause of the Anabaptistes, who (as we declared before in the seconde chap.) go about by this place to establisth Plato his communion of all things: and bicause of false gospellers, which intermit all exercise of Christian contribution. Therfore, for the more easie vnderstanding of this Treatise, we will first consider the summe of the matter, then the trade and order which the faithfull obserued in this case, and last of all, what the fruite and effect hereof was.

He comprehendeth the summe hereof in fewe wordes, where he sayth: No man sayde ought of the things that he possessed was his owne, but they had all things common. Here the proprietie of things is not denied, bicause there is expresse mention made of possession, but he expresseth the affection of minde which the faithfull had, who although they possessed houses, fermes, and such other like, yet no man was so wedded to them, that he thought they were giuen to him alone, but woulde haue them to serue the vse and necessitie of others also. Whereby we gather, that all thinges were common among them by will, but not by lawe. After which sort the Proouerbe sayth, all things are common among friendes. And in this place the true fountaine of Christian beneuolence, and contribution is declared, that is to say, a minde which is not addict and tyed to the desire of riches, but which iudgeth truly of them, and the vse of them. For according to Paulus saying, the vse of the riches of this worlde, consisteth onely in meate and drinke, and clothing, wherein holoseruisme also is vnderstanded, forasmuch as we be borne naked into this worlde, neyther shall we carie any thing hence with vs. But where the faithfull person vnderstandeth that mannes nature is suffised with fewe things, he cannot be drowened in ouer great desire of heaping riches together, and he iudgeth not his treasure to consist in them, and although he seeth they multiplie & increase, yet he setteth not his whole hart vpon them. But vnderstanding rather, that he is but a stewarde of them, he labourereth to make him friendes of the vniust Mammon, which may receyue him when he shall haue neede, into euerlasting habitations. The consideration hereof maketh the goodes of the faithfull to be common vnto other, although they keepe to themselves the right of proprietie.

The maner and order which they obserued in thys distribution, maketh

for

for the declaration of thys sense. For thereof Luke sayth: As many as were possessours of houses and landes, solde them, and brought the price of the things that were solde, and layde them downe at the Apostles feete. And distribution was made to euery man, according as he had neede. First, he sayth, houses and landes were solde, which euery man dyd not, ne yet they that did sell, solde all, and reserued nothing to themselves. For there are dyuers examples of many which had houses of their owne, and kept families, which Paule not onely permytted, but also as we may reade, he streightly commaunded the same. Therefore they solde as much as seemed requisite for the present necessitie of the Church, and it was at euery mans disposition, eyther to keepe, or sell his owne, as shall hereafter appeare by Peters wordes to Ananias. Further, they layde not the price or money downe for all men to take, but brought it to the Apostles, whome they thought good to haue the distribution thereof, vntill Deacons were ordeyned, by publike consent of the congregation to take that office vpon them. Neither did the Apostles so publike the money by ought vnto them, that euery man might take thereof what he lysted, but distribution was made to euery man, according as he had neede. Therefore there was here no disordinate communion of goodes, no confusion of things, no byolent vsurping of other mens goodes, such as the phrenetyke and seditious ymagine. And if we consider all the circumstances well, it shall easily appeare, that this contribution was ordeined to the ende, that the Church might haue some publike treasure to help to serue the poore, that they neede not be compelled through pouertie, to shrink from the fayth of Christ, and the bodie of the congregation. And they had no part of these goodes, who eyther had goodes of their owne, or were able by any honest labour to get their lyuing. Here haue we to consider how Ecclesiasticall goodes should be vsed. The beginning of them was such as is here declared. For as in the primitive Church, those that were of the richer sort, of their godly liberalitie, gaue their goodes to the Church: so came it to passe in the dayes afterwarde, that as the number of christians increased, kings, and Princes, and others, who had great wealth, following the example of these men, enriched Churches and Colleges, with yearely reuenues and tythes, as manye olde foundations testifie. Wyllyng that these goodes should be so vsed, that by them true doctryne might be conserued, and the poore maintayned, who they knewe were chiefly commended of Christ to his Church. Which vse were made in these dayes also, eyther to be obserued in Churches, or beyng decayed, to be restored, if we wyl haue a forme and presydent of the primitive Church remayning. But we may easilyer with sighing seeke thys vse, than call it agayne. For vngodlynesse is come to such boldenesse, that a many are not afrayde to chalenge to themselves, those things which in tymes past our auncestours of their liberalitie gaue to the whole congregation. And here in thys poynt we haue scene all the reformations almost of the Churches, in our dayes stoppe: as though it had bene sufficient to haue taken from Monkes and Fryers, the administration of Church goodes, and not rather to haue restored them agayne to the auncient and right vse, wherefore they were first ordeyned and serued. Yea, it were better to leaue them still to those filthie hypocrites, than to stumble at the same stone with them. And if we ought, according to the example of the primitive Church, to bestow our owne goodes,

and order of
distribution.

1. Tim. 5.

Actes. 6.

boon the congregation, if neede so requyre, then must they grieuouſly ſinne, which gyuing nothing of their owne, openly bereaue men of that which other haue gnyen them. Hereof we ſee it cometh to paſſe, that both the poore are neglected, and Miniſters the more rare and ſelde, and all religion decayeth.

The fruite
or commodi-
tie of contri-
bution.

Deut. 15.

But let vs ſee the ſingular fruite of this chriſtian diſtribution, whiche Luke intermedleth with this diſcription, that we maye hereby perceyue, what we haue in theſe dayes to truſt to, which ſo eaſily neglect the exerciſe thereof. The Euangelist ſheweth a double commoditie enſuyng hereof. Firſt, it came to paſſe, that none among them lacked. Wherefore they fulfilled the lawe that commaundeth there ſhoulde bee no begger in Iſraell. This ſeemeth nowe a dayes an impoſſible thing to many, while they conſider the multitude of the poore. But they are confuted by the example of the primatiue church. For by what reaſon can it ſeeme impoſſible to them, that liue in reſt and peace, ſeeing the godlye brought it to paſſe, in the miſt of their enemies, in a bloudthirſtie Citie? Were they able with theyr owne goodes to finde all their poore, and ſhall we, furniſhed with the helpe of rich donations, and great treaſures, wherewith the Churches in tymes paſſed haue bene indowed thinke it impoſſible, for vs to doe? Let a meane be obſerued, that euery one may haue accordyng to his neede, and we ſhall perceyue we ſhall be holpen with the bleſſing of the Lord, and liberalitie of the godly in ſuch wyſe, that we ſhall find no ſuch lacke hereafter. That which we requyre, is both difficult and impoſſible, becauſe the thing is handled prepoſterouſly, and out of order, for they haue leaſt, which haue moſt neede: and on them is moſt beſtowed, whoſe partes it had bene to giue their owne goodes to the Church. And if we would conſider, what daunger, trouble, and diſcommoditie, both publiſhly and priuately bleth to enſue of the multitude of beggers and poore: we ſhould ſee that the commoditie of this chriſtian contribution which the primatiue church receyued, was of ineſtimable value. But one other commoditie ſpringeth of this, that great grace was with them, that is, they were in fauor, and accepted with all the people, and with thoſe alſo, that as yet were not illuminated with the knowledge of Chriſt. For ſuch is the force of liberalitie, that it draweth very enemies to wonder at it, and loue it. And becauſe the Lorde taketh it as beſtowed on him, that is giuen to the poore in his name: he bleth to recompence them with this rewarde, that they ſhall be in fauour and authozitie with many men. If we would conſider this one thing, we ſhould not marueyle, why they be hated and enuyed which profeſſe the Goſpell. For beſides, that the worlde hateth the light of the truth, and God will haue vs exerciſed, and inbred with the naughtineſſe thereof, our ſtonie heartes, which neglect the chriſtian pover- tie, deſerueth the ſame: to ſay nothing in the meane while of our naughtineſſe, whereby we hale to vs the goodes of the Church, vnder colour of re- fourmiſing the Goſpell: A number of poore in the meane while cryng out, to whoſe finding and reliefe the ſame ſhould haue gone. Let vs compare the blaſe of the primatiue Church with thoſe thinges that we doe, and then if we be not aſhamed of our ſelues, we ſhall worthily be called men, not onely without bluſhing, but alſo of moze impudencie, than harlots.

The libera-
litye of Joſes
Barnabas.

Howbeit, he addeth to thys treatiſe, a ſingular example of beneuolence, and chriſtian collation, that one Iofes a Leuyte of Cyprus ſhewed, who ſolde

hys

hys lande, and layde the price thereof doone at the Apostles fete, that is to be bestowed, as they thought good. It maye seeme that thys example is therefore first declared before the example of Ananias and Sapphira, to the intent their naughtynesse mought be the more perceyued, who coulde not be moued with so notable a Presydent. The holy Ghost also teacheth vs howe they ought to be commended, which shewe any notable token of vertue, that the prouocation of their prayse, might stirre vpp the mindes of other of more towardnesse, to followe them. Twæ thinges are tolde of Ioses, which make hym the more to be commended. For where he was a Leuyte, he was conuerted to the fayth of Christ, to whome the priestes were molte enemyes, bicause Christ greatly hindered and empayred their gayne and honoz. But Gods spirite bloweth where it pleaseeth, neyther must we dispayre of any mans health, bycause of his profession and trade of lyfe. Further, where he was a Cypriote, he so loued the faythfull of Jerusalem, that on them onely he woulde bestowe, or shew thys liberalitie. For he vnderstode without doubt, that in Christ all difference of nations was abolished, as otherwheres the Scripture teacheth. And his so great liberalitie wanted not a singuler commoditie. For his vertue is enrolled in perpetuall memorie, and the Apostles thought good to call hym Barnabas, that is to saye, the sonne of consolation. For he deserved to haue so singuler a name, which by his liberalitie gaue so singuler comfort to so many. In the meane season we be taught, what names they deserue, which defraude the poore of Christ, by raping and reauing the Church goodes, and as much as in them is, let and hinder the religion and doctrine of Christ. These be in verie dede, the children of disturbance, and perdition, whose iudgement sleepeeth not, as the example of Ananias following, will teache vs. Let vs marke the exercises of the primitive Church, and gyue our selues to the lyke, in thys most troublesome worlde, where Sathan euerywhere raiseth vp persecutours against the doctrine of truth. Let the preachers be armed with a bold liberty of teaching the word, and let them remember they are the seruants of God, whome no authoritie of man ought to moue. Let them which professe the name of Christ, be at vnitie togither in Christ. Let them labour to shewe their vnitie and con corde by workes of liberalitie, and specially by helping of the poore. These be the markes of Christians, and these be the strongest weapons, and defences of Christians. For by these they be knowne to be the Disciples of Iesus Christ, who is able easily to defende them against all the assaultes of the worlde, and shall at length de lyuer them from all perill and daunger, and bzing them to his celestiaall kingdome:
to him be prayse, honour, power, and glozpe for
euer. Amen.

The fift chapiter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The. xxxij. Homelie.

A Certaine man named Ananias with Sapphira his wife, solde a possession, and kept awaye part of the price, his wife also being of counsell, and brought a certayne part, and layde it downe at the Apostles feete. But Peter sayde, Ananias, how is it that Sathan hath filled thine hart, that thou shouldest lye vnto the holy ghost, and keepe awaye part of the price of the lande? Pertayned it not to thee onely? and after it was solde, was it not in thine owne power? why hast thou conceyued this thing in thine hart? Thou hast not lyed vnto men, but vnto God. When Ananias hearde these wordes, hee fell downe, and gaue vp the ghost. And great feare came on all them that heard these things. And the yong men rose vp, and put him apart, and caried him out and buried him.



The Euangelist Luke hath declared what exercises and studies the primitive Church was giuen vnto, in the most perillous time of persecution. We haue there seene all things belonging to a perfite and most absolute forme, and order of a Church. For the Apostles taught the worde of God boldly and truly. The people as marte was, receyued the same, as their vnanimitie, concorde, and earnest loue, abundantly declared. But the holy ghost was not ignoraunt, that there would be alwayes phrenetike

and troublesome men, which herof would take occasion rashly to condemne all Churches, wherein all things were not answerable to the perfection of the primitive Church. Wherefore he would haue the historie of Ananias and Sapphira to folow, which teacheth vs that Satan had in this holy society his bondmen, whose dissimulation at last burst forth and appeared. Wherefore nothing is in all poynts sounde and perfite. And they are not to be regarded which condemne whole congregations, because of a few of dissembling merchauntes, or voluptuous liuers that are founde in the same: considering we reade of Iudas among the Disciples of Christ, and that he testifieth that as well badde as good be drawen by preaching of the Gospell. Before we beginne the historie, we must marke that as Iudas tooke occasion of his sinne by the goodes of the Church: so Ananias stumbling at the same stone,

begunne

begunne the first disturbance in the Church. The holy ghost thought good to admonithe vs by these examples, that the managing of ecclesiasticall goods is a perillous matter, and that they manifestly put their saluation in hazarde that offende therein. Therefore whosoever glorie in the name of Christ and his Gospell, let them diligently take hærde to themselues. But if they would weigh this one thing, they woulde neuer lyke hungrye Cor- mozaunts, runne so greedily to the administring of them. The hystorie hath in it two partes. The first declareth what became of Ananias, and next, what of Sapphira his wife. But for the better vnderstanding of the first part, we will first consider Ananias facte, then Peters iudgement touching the same, last of all, the punishment which God layde vpon him.

Ananias deede is tolde with great simplicitie, least we shoulde thinke the Apostles leaned any thing to their affections. A certain man named Ananias with Sapphira his wife, solde a possession, and kept awaye part of the price, his wife also being of counsell: and brought a certaine part, and layde it downe at the Apostles feete. Here is principally to be enquired what that fault was which the Lorde a little while after, punished with sodeine death. For after the iudgement of the fleshe here is no fault made, but we may thinke Ananias rather worthe of prayse and rewarde. For to sell his lande, it was no fault, because it was lawfull for him so to doe, both by Gods law and mans. And of any craft or collusion bled in the bargaine and sale, here is no mention. Neyther hath the Lorde forbidden vs, to reserue part of our owne goodes for our necessities, because Paule sayeth, they be worse than Infidels, which looke not to their owne families. And he teacheth vs, that we must not so giue almes, that our liberalitie be occasion to others of ease, and to our selues of want and distresse. Furthermore, it seemeth he is be- ryne beneficiall to the Church of Christ, that giueth but the halfe, the third, or fourth part of his goodes to the vse thereof. Also Christ testifieth that he shall be rewarded that giueth but a cup of colde water to any of his Disci- ples in his name. Therefore we must consider the minde of Ananias, which we maye gather in the other part of the hystorie by the wordes of Sapphira, and so we shall see wherein he offended: to saye, in hypocrisie and counter- feyting of fayth and loue, wherewith he went about to deceyue as well God as the congregation. For the ambitious man sawe what prayse and glorie Ioses the Leuite had gotten through his liberalitie. Wherefore, he being desirous also to be extolled, thought good to doe lyke as he did, yet because he was couetous, meaning to prouide for nede that afterwarde might en- sue, he priuily withholdeth a part of the price for his, and his wiues necessi- ties, seeking yet to be accounted in the number of those which had giuen all they had vnto the Church. Many other things be annexed with this fault, which aggrauate the heynousnesse thereof. For, to saye nothing of the am- bicion and couetousnesse which tossed the vnhappy minde of this hypocrite, as it were, with contrarie waues: it is manifest that he was distrustfull, and altogether boyde of fayth, which is the beginning of all mischiefe. For he distrusted the promises of Christ, who sayth that he will alwayes helpe his Church, and will abundantly prouide those that be his, of meate, drinke, and cloth. Which promises, if he had beleued, he woulde neyther haue feared penurie following, nor by craft haue made prouision for the time to come. To this distrust was ioyned the great contempt of God, such as Da- uid

1. Ananias
facte.

1. Tim. 5.

2. Cor. 8.

Math. 10.

Math. 23. 6.

Psal. 14. 94

Math. 6.

Iohn. 12.

2. Peters
iudgement
touching A-
naniass fact.

Math 10.

uid ascribeth to them which in their harts say either, there is no God, or else perswade themselves, he regardeth not what becommeth of men: and supposed he had only to doe with men, which is the propertie of all hypocrites. For it is not like that he durst thus haue done, if he had beleued that God had bene the beholder of our thoughts and deedes. Beside this, he committed sacriledge in his owne goodes. For where he woulde haue men beleue that he had giuen all the money he receyued for his lande, to the Church: he thereby plainly confessed that it was due to the Church. Wherefore he cannot auoide the blotte of sacriledge. And where afterward all they which had giuen their goodes to the reliefe of the Church, were founde of the Church treasurie and money, it was a sacrilegall collusion, whereby he ment to deceiue the Church, in ioyning himselfe to them, whom the Church gaue liuing vnto. So full of euill is distrust and vnbeliefe, and such newe vices spring therof continually. So Ananias is a president of all false Christians, who meane so to professe Christ, that it shall neuer be to their losse or hinderance. For when they see Christ hath set vp his kingdome in any nation, and doubt of the continuance thereof, they will consent and agree to the present reformation, but they will well beware of giuing any such counsaile, as may be occasion of any losse to them when the Church fayleth or decayeth. They go about to serue two maisters, that is to saye, Christ and the worlde, which Christ himselfe sayth is impossible. Yet such men moste commonly haue the greatest prayse of wisdom and modestie. But in very deepe they be Ananiases, whose heart is not right with the Lorde, although there appeare some benefites of theirs towards the Church. These kinde of men beare the swaye now a dayes, and woulde God they alone bare it. For there is almost a greater number of such, as beside they doe no good to the Church, ware riche of the church goodes, and appropriate to them selues the things that other haue giuen, who followe the example of Iudas, which where he himselfe gaue nothing vnto Christ, vsed to imbecill and pilfer awaye that that other did giue. And not content with this wickednesse, betrayed Christ also, so that by his example, we may learne what to looke for of such as he is.

Furthermore, where in these dayes, such men as these are in all places, and will be taken commonly for Purles and refoormers of the Church: they go about by manye reasons to defende themselves, and for the most part, cloke their couetousnesse with the tranquillitie of the Church, and common weale, the lawes of man, feaultyes, donations, and many such lyke. But let vs heare the iudgement of the holy ghost, pronounced by Peter the Apostle, that thereby it may appeare, what we maye iudge of them, which in these dayes be worse than Ananias. For Peter by reuelation of the spirite, perceyued thys guyle, and howe great prayse so euer Ananias thinketh to get by his subtiltie, yet he coulde not beguyle Peters spirite, so true the saying of Christ is, that nothing is so secret, but it shal be disclosed. And the Apostle cloketh not the fault he espyed, but most severely accuseth it. By which example we are taught, that Ministers must not onely, openly accuse manifest faultes, but also whatsoeuer the wicked go secretly about, against the truth, and church of Christ. For as it is the propertie of a good Capitayne, not only to resist the open attemptes of his enimies, but also to preuent and disclose their ambushes, and lyings in wayte: so must Ministers

nisters of the worde, fight wyth all encouragement agaynst all the enter-
 prises of the wicked. There is in Peters wordes, a marueylous behemen-
 cie, and his saying ysleth (as it were) by certayne steps, to the ende Ana-
 nias heynous fault might appeare the more. First, he detecteth the roote and
 beginning of all this euill, saying: Ananias, how is it, that Satan hath filled
 thine heart? By the which wordes, he declareth that he is destitute of all
 beliefe, and a plaine reprobate. The godly and elect are also tempted of
 Satan, which runneth vp and downe alwaye, seeking whome he may de-
 uoure. But for as much as they resist hym, being strong in fayth, he can
 not fyll their heartes. The state of the wicked, is of an other sort, who af-
 ter they be once fallen from the fayth, are wholly possessed of Satan, so that
 there is no more place left for the holy ghost in them. We are also admoni-
 shed, that all hypocrites, and as many as vse dissimulation in religion, are
 the bondemen of Satan. For Christ teacheth vs that he is the father of
 lying, and by thys argument, proueth the Phariseys, to be bozne of the
 Deuill. Wherevnto the example of Iudas also may be referred, into whom
 it is sayde that Satan entred, after he had gone about by hys rooted hypo-
 crisie to beguyle Christ, and the Apostles, at his last supper. Furthermore,
 Peter sheweth the effect of Satan, where he sayth Ananias was brought
 to that poynt, to lye vnto the holye ghost, which may be vnderstanded, two
 maner of wayes. For partly he falsely fayned, he was ledde by the holye
 ghost, and partly he went about to beguyle the Church, which he knewe
 hytherto by many arguments was endued wyth the holy ghost. Both these
 meanings argue an impudent boldenesse in hym, and declare howe farre
 men runne, if once they suffer Satan to haue power ouer their mindes.
 Thirdly, drawing nearer to Ananias fact, he accuseth him, for that he had
 withdradone a parte of the price of his lande. Therefore he accuseth him of
 theft and sacriledge, which (as I shewed a little before) we may commyt
 in our owne goodes. And they are all partakers with Ananias, which co-
 uetously conuert to their owne vse, the goodes which they knowe are due
 to the poore, or else ryotously waste and consume them. We offende herein
 both particulerly and in generall. In generall, whyle manye conuert the
 Church goodes, as they are called to prophane vses, the poore in the meane
 season not onely pyning away for hunger, but also the Churches lying de-
 solate for want of faythfull and fitte teachers. We offende also privately,
 when we glozie that God hath appoynted vs for stewardeg of his goodes,
 and in the meane whyle we eyther make hauck of them, neglecting the
 poore, or else hoorde them vp at home, so that they neyther profite vs, nor
 others. Yet such menne as these, commonly complaine of the multitude of
 beggers, as though it were impossible to helpe them all. But they are re-
 proued of lying, by their prodigalitie: which to maintayne, they haue goods
 ynough, by the rust of their money, which with insatiable greedinesse they
 lay vp, and looke vpon in their Coffers: and by the abundance of their ap-
 parell, which they rather suffer mothes to eate, than they wyll gyue them,
 or the money they might make by selling them, vnto the poore, and so (as
 Iames sayth) they shall one day feele their damnation to be increased, by
 those verie thinges, wherevnto they haue bene so much giuen and addic-
 ted. But that Ananias should haue nothing to excuse hymselfe by, Peter sheweth
 he was forced by no necessitie to doe so wickedly, saying: Pertayned not
 thy

Iohn. 8.

Iohn. 13.

thy lande to thy selfe onely? and after it was solde, was it not in thyne owne power? Thou mightest eyther haue solde thy lande, or else haue kept all the money therof to thy selfe, and no man would haue thought thee euer the lesse woorthy the company of the Christians. Whereby it may euidently be gathered, that no man was compelled by any lawe to sell hys goodes, but that this was a free and voluntary contrubution, as was declared in the former Sermon, and yet Peter leaueth not here, but sheweth the heynousnesse of thys offence to be so great, that a Christian man shoulde not once haue thought any such thing, much lesse haue done it. For he sayth: Why hast thou conceyued this thing in thy heart? For Christ requyrez so great sinceritie and byrightnesse in those that be his, that he will not onely haue their maners and outwarde conuersation pure, but also their myndes and cogitations boyde of all dissimulation. Last of all, he rehearseth the chiefe of all the matter. Thou hast not lyed to men, but vnto God. For thou hast not to doe with men onely, but also with God, which searcheth the hartes, and the reynes, who thou shalt perceyue will be a reuenger of thy wickednesse. Let vs marke in these thinges, howe to take them, which vnder the pretence of fayth and religion, go about to deceyue menne. Amongst whome, with Ananias, they be the chiefe, which hauing on both sides, so professe Christes religion, that although the kingdome of Christ fayle, or fall vpon the earth, they will proude for themselves well ynough. Next vnto these be those, which lyke vnto Iudas, robbe Christ and his Church, eyther by craft or open force, and at length betraye him with a kisse. Wherunto may be ioyned Ieroboamshe princes, which vse religion to establishe their tyranny, whyle they prescribe such articles of fayth, and thrust in such rytes of religion, as they knowe are not commaunded by Gods worde, but depende vpon the mere traditions of men: and seeke none other thing, but to keepe men in awe and obedience, ouer whome they raigne, as we reade Ieroboam once dyd, the first authoz of tyranny among the Israelites. And as many as vnder the cloke of the gospel, and christian fayth, seeke to lyue licentiouslye, are lyke vnto them, whereof there is in these dayes a great number. And it is an easie matter, for all these, eyther to beguyle men, or else to put them so to silence, that they shall not betray out their hypocrisie. But bycause they lye not vnto men onely, but also to God hymselfe, they shall neuer escape unpunished. For as nothing can be hidden from hym: so vseth he most to hate and abhorre lyers, of all others. And Christ testifyeth that such shall be shutte out of his kingdome. For who would thinke him an honest man, which would suffer other to be beguyled vnder the pretence of his name? Therefore what folly, or madnesse is it, to imagine God to be such an one, who is truth it selfe.

But to retorne to the history: doth Ananias fact seeme so horrible a thing to Peter onely? Nay, it is more horrible in Gods iudgement, as the successe thereof declareth. For as soone as he heard these wordes, he ended his lyfe by sodaine death, casting all them into a great feare, by his miserable ende, who heard of the same: whereof we will speake hereafter, when we shall entreate of the like destruction of Sapphira his wife. First, we haue here to consider the efficacie of Gods worde, which God will haue performed, though it be vttered but by man. For the strength thereof dependeth not on mans authoritie, but standeth of, and by it selfe. Thys is to be vnderstanded

1. Reg. 12. 13.

Psalme. 5.
Prou. 12.
Apoca. 21.

3. The punishment of Ananias.

derstanded as well of the promises, as threates which are conteyned in the scripture. For whatsoeuer the preachers promise the faythfull seruants of God, they shall be as well fulfilled, as if God from heauen would thunder them out. And whatsoeuer they threaten vnto the wicked, and prophane contemptners of God, they shall vndoubtedly fall vpon them. The worde of Christ witnesseth the same, which sayth, that whatsoeuer his ministers binde or loose on earth, shall be bounde, or loosed in heauen. And let no man here object vnto me, that God alwayes bleth not so present an execution of his iudgements, as we here see. For although the wicked take occasion hereby to mock, and make light all maner of threates: Yet shall they buye this carelesnesse full deare, when they shall here the voyce of Christ their iudge, whome they shall not be able to abyde. Let vs rather acknowledge the long suffering of God, which therfore sometimes differeth his punishment, to giue vs a time to repent in. And sometimes againe sheweth some examples of his iudgement, to declare the truth and authoritie of his worde.

Math. 16.
Iohn. 20.

Furthermore, it is to be considered, how Peter slayeth Ananias by the worde and pronouncing of Gods iudgement, wherunto that is not vnlike that Paule did, when he strake Elymas the Sorcerer blinde, as we shall see in the. xiiij. Chapter. These things might seeme to haue bene vnseemely for such as had the Ministerie of lyfe and saluation committed vnto them. But the Apostles deserue no maner of reprehension, to whome amongst other giftes of the holy ghost, Paule teacheth the efficacie of powers was giuen, that is an effectuall power of perfourming the thing that they spake. Here also is the right and authoritie of the sword proued, which the Magistrate hath to punish the malefactours by. For if Peter and Paule may be excused for that they blessed the gift giuen them of God agaynst Ananias and Elymas the Sorcerer: with what reason shall we accuse the Magistrate, who lykewise hath the authoritie of the sword committed him of God? And me thinketh there needeth no long disputation, agaynst them, which in matters of religion will haue the authoritie of the sword altogether to cease. For though we graunt them, that no man ought violently to be compelled to the fayth, for that it is the gift of God, yet is it the Magistrates duetie, by the sword to keepe vnder both blasphemers, deceyuers, and false teachers, least for lacke of punishment, they doe, and speake agaynst the glorie of God, and publike tranquillitie. See the law. Leuit. 24. Deut. 13. Neither seemeth Peter in thys present place, nor Paule afterwarde, to haue sought any other thing, than the defence of religion. In primis let vs beare in minde the chiefe poynt of this hyslozie, and being frayde with the horrible example of Ananias, let vs flye dissimulation, let vs worship God in spirite and truth, and cleaue to Jesus Christ, with mindes burning in godly fayth: to whome be prayse, honour, power and glory for euer. Amen.

1. Cor. 12.

Rom. 13.

The. xxxiiij. Homelie.

AND it came to passe, that as it were about the space of three houres after, his wyfe came in, ignorant of that which was done. And Peter sayd vnto hir. Tell me. Solde ye not the lande for so much? And shee sayde yea, for so much.

Ll. j.

Then

Then Peter saide vnto hir. Why haue yee agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lorde? Beholde the feete of them which haue buried thy husbände, are at the dore, and shall carie thee out. Then fell she downe streyte waye at his feete, and yelded vp the ghost. And the yong men came in, and founde hir deade, and caryed hir out, and buried hir by hir husbände.

Because our Sauour Iesus Christ was not ignoraunt, that there would be alwayes false brethren and hypocrites in the Church, which would be authors of great offences: he would therefore in the beginning and springth of the Church, haue some terrible example shewed agaynst them, whereby we myght learne what such as they be, shoulde looke for and trust to. We haue sene the first part hereof in Ananias, in whom the conditions of hypocrites are trimly expressed. These men are destitute of true fayth, which thing is the fountaine & beginning of all euill. For hereof it cometh to passe, that they wickedly mocke and despise as well God, as his Church. Herebinto maye we adde incurable obstinacie, the accomplishment of all vice, wherby it cometh to passe, that a man maye easilier conuert open synners, than such as haue once purposed in theyr minde, to deceyue the congregation by hypocrisie and dissimulation. These things shall appeare the more plainely, if we consyder the other part of thys storie, which containeth as dolorous and lamentable an ende of Sapphira, which within thre houres after, not knowing of hir husbändes death, came in vnto Peter, and the faythfull which were with him, as Luke reporteth. For commonly it so cometh to passe, that we knowe those things last, which it behoued vs first to knowe, bicause menne vse rather in our absence to disclose our faultes, than to reprove vs to our face. Then also the affection of loue so worketh in the godly, that they vnwillingly bring tydings of anye thing, which may giue occasion of grieve to their neighbours. Which seemeth me to be the cause that Sapphira as yet, knewe not of the death of hir husband. But to the ende we may receyue the more vtilitie by consideration of thys hystorie: first of all we will speake of the question wherewith Peter beginneth with hir, and then of the ouer bolde confidence of Sapphira, and last of all, of the punishment, wherewith God was reuenged on hir.

Peters demaunde was neyther light nor superfluous. For thereby Sapphiras impietie did appeare the playner, which otherwise might eyther haue seemed ignoraunt of hir husbändes craft, or else to haue bene induced by hys authoritie so to haue dissembled. Therefore Peter requireth of hir a reason, of this their doing, saying: Tell me, folde you the lande for so much? Furthermore, where the successe of the matter declareth, that Peter did nothing of priuate affection, but by the instinct of the holy ghost, it behoueth vs here to marke the order that God vseth in punishing the wicked. The incurable naughtinesse of Sapphira, could not be hidden from him, neyther coulde any man haue letted him, to haue punished the same by and by. But he woulde haue a time of repentaunce graunted hir, and hir minde to be tryed, and stirred bp by a strange demaunde, least he might seme ouerhastie to anye man by his seueritie. Such examples of Gods long sufferance, are euerywhere extant. For he is well ware of vling any crueltie against

Peter reporteth
Sapphiras
naughtinesse.

against the guiltie, as Tyrannes doe, but will haue them vnderstande by what offences they haue prouoked his wrath and punishment agaynst themselves. Thus we read he did with our first parents, and he gaue them that liued in the beginning of the worlde, an hundred and twentie yeares space, wherein to repent them, and did also boughsafe to sende them Noah, the preacher of righteousness. Likewise he would not destroy the Chanaanites and Amorrhites, vntill he saw they filled the measure of iniquitie, and were become altogether incurable. But what neede examples, seeing we haue plentie both in the holy & prophane hystories, to let passe those things whereof wee see experience daylie, both in others, and in our selues? Let vs rather apply these matters to our instruction, and first of all, let vs not abuse the long suffering of God. For he prouoketh vs to repentance. Let vs not therefore like reprobates, procure vnto vs the wrath of God, by contynuing in synne without repentance, and waite euery day worse and worse. For God is slacke in punishing, but this slacknesse, (as the heathen haue vsed to saye) he recompenceth with weight and heauinesse of punishment. Also let vs followe the goodnesse of God, and not be to hastie in our iudgement, although it appeare some haue deserued punishment. For where God euery where desyreth the saluation, rather than destruction of men, what boldnesse is it I pray you, to stryue to ouercome Gods iustice by our rigour and seueritie: which thing they haue chiefly to consider, which haue receiued power and authoritie from God to punish the other, least through their seueritie and hastinesse of iudgement, they bring the bodies and soules of them in ieopardie, whose saluation they shoulde principallye seeke.

But let vs harken to Sapphira, who boldly lyeth without all shame and feare of God. And she doth not simply affirme the thing, but vsing a signe of contestation, confirmeth as it were by an oth, that which she knew to be false. For where euery man had libertie to giue what seemed him good, it was lyke hitherto that no man was required to giue account before the congregation what he receyued and layde forth. Therefore Sapphira should haue thought that it was not without some mysterie, that such a question was now moued, especially knowing in her selfe that she was guiltie. But where without all care, and boldly she dareth to lye, she proueth by a strong argument, that she is altogether incurable. For what goodnesse may a man there hope for, where shame is banished, wherewith honest natures (as it were with a bridle) are kept in doing their dutie? In the meane season, Sapphira expresseth a confident audacitie, which is the peculiar propertie of hypocrites. For whome feare they, that haue minded to beguyle God, and are not afrayde of his sight? Wherefore the Scripture by many examples proueth that that there is nothing more bolde and confident than hypocrisie. And where open sinners for the most part fall doونه at the first worde that God speaketh, and are afrayde to come in his sight: Hypocrites dare euen then baineite of their integritie & perfection, when they feele their consciences wounded & layd open before the iudgement of God. Caine sheweth vs an example of this thing, who being asked for Abel his brother, durst maliciously answer God & say: who hath made me my brothers keeper? And in the Prophete, the Hypocrites expostulate with God, as being to wayward, where they saye: wherefore fast we, and thou seest vs not? wee put our liues

Gene. 3.

Gene. 6.
2. Peter. 2.
Gene. 15.

Roma. 2.

Valerius
Maximus
1. booke.
2. chap.

Gene. 4.

Esay. 58.

Malach 3.

Math. 26.

Ananias and
Sapphira,
tempted the
spirite of the
Lorde.

Deuter. 6.

Consent in
synne deser-
ueth punish-
ment.

Gene. 3.

Ephen. 5.

Cololl. 3.

to straightnesse, and thou regardest vs not? **Againe**: It is but lost labour to serue God: what profite haue we for keeping his commaundementes, and for walking humbly before the Lorde of hostes? **What shall we saye of Iudas the Traytour**, who when he knewe Christ was not ignoraunt of his wickednesse, and perceiued he was grievously rebuked and reprehended, yet with the other Apostles he dare to aske Christ, whether he suspect him of so great an offence? And Sapphira's confidence is as great, considering there were so many examples that declared the Apostles were inspired with the holy ghost. It is very profitable to marke well these thinges, that through their boldenesse and temeritie hypocrites beguile vs not, or by their wicked sayings put vs of.

But let vs returne vnto Peter, who by inspiration of the holy spirite vnderstandeth this fraude and guyle, and suffreth himselfe not to be moued with this womanish and hypocriticall boldenesse, but pronounce th the sentence of God which the same spirite put in his minde, agaynst hir, which consisteth of two partes. The first accuseth and reproveth hir sinne. For God punisheth no person, but first conuict of his sinne, that he may vnderstande wherefore he is punished. Howe commeth it to passe that you haue agreed together to tempt the spirite of the Lorde? He ampliflyeth the boldenesse and heynousnesse of the fact, by admiration and interrogation: and he sayth they haue conspired together to tempt the spirite of the Lorde. But if a man woulde haue asked Ananias or Sapphira of this their doing: I beleue they woulde haue earnestly denyed they had had any such meaning. But it maketh no matter what iudgement we haue of our sinnes, for they are examined after the rule of Gods lawe. And bicause these two married folke went about to beguyle the congregation, in whome the spirite of God is resident and reigneth: it cannot be denied, but through wicked temeritie they tempted the spirite of God. Therefore, by their hypocriticall wilynesse, they sinned agaynst the lawe, which forbiddeth to tempt God. And they are lymed with the same fault which go about in these dayes to beguyle the Church of Christ with counterfayting of sayth and holynesse, who also shall well find that God will not let them go unpunished for their tempting of him.

And least Sapphira might be excused by the authoritie and commaundement of hir husbände, Peter first accuseth the consent that was betwene them, and by that argument taketh from hir all excuse. Where we learne that no man must consent to euill men, if he will escape the iudgement of God, no not to those which haue authoritie ouer vs giuen them of God. For the man had power giuen him ouer his wife, when it was sayde to Eue: Thy lust shall pertayne to thy husbände, and hee shall haue the rule ouer thee. And the Apostles commaunde woues to be obedient vnto their husbändes. But Sapphira is blamed for this onely, that she consented to hir husbände, who craftily withhelde a part of the money which he woulde seme to haue giuen to the church. Therefore the sinne that is committed agaynst the lawes of God, can be excused by no authoritie or commaundement of man: bicause we must obeye God rather than man, as Peter before had sayde, and shall be repeated agayne in this Chapter. Nowe, if it be not lawfull to consent to their sinnes which haue power ouer vs, by the ordinaunce of God: what shall become of those, which allowe and defende not onely with consent of minde, but by vnlawfull company and publike prayse, the wickednesse

nesse of them, whose companie they maye altogether forbear, yea, which by the lawes of God they ought to forbear: To say nothing of them which are companions with them in their traueyle and daungers, and helpe them forward in their mischieuousnesse.

The other part of Gods sentence pronounced by Peter, conteyneth the punishment which Sapphira had with hir husbände. Beholde (sayeth he) the feete of them which buried thy husbände, bee ready at the doore, to carye thee out. And by and by, she fell downe deade at Peters fete, and was caried forth, and buried by hir husbände. This is the tenour of Gods iustice, that they which commit like fault, are punished with like punishment, as he testifieth in the Prophete, saying: Should I not punishe these things, and should I not be auenged of all such people as these be? Hereof ought a generall rule to be taken, which must extende to all sinnes and wickednesse. For he that in times past reuenged most seuerely the oppression of the poore, vniust violence, tyrannie, vsurie, slaughter, adulterie, whooredome, and such like: he will punishe the same in vs at this day, except we repent as becommeth Christians. Yet the chiefe ende and meaning of this place is, that we should learne what remaineth for them, which vnder the pretence of Christ, seeke their owne lucre, and dare deceyue the Church. It seemeth sometimes that the worlde laugheth vpon them, but their felicitie is not stable, and they long enioye not their goodes wrongfully gotten. For, the gladnesse of the vngodly is quickly ended, and the ioy of hypocrites continueth but the twinkling of an eye. We haue also an example hereof in Iudas the Traytor, who when he thought he had best prouided for his owne behoufe, and seemed to haue bene in high fauour with the Bishops, feeleth in himselfe such seueritie of Gods iustice, that it driueth him to the halter, so that he coulde long enioye neyther his lyfe, nor his money, which was dearer to him than his lyfe. And God graunt that a number in these dayes, taste not of the lyke punishment, which vnder colour of the Gospell haue sought nothing else but the spoyle and possession of the Church goods. We haue seene these men turned out againe by Monkes and Bishops, and that they haue founde no helpe or succour in those goodes, which they had layde by for that vse to defende the Church, by force agaynst the open enemies of religion. And better successe let them not looke for, which commit lyke offence. For if Ananias and Sapphira deserued soderne death, who as Luke writeth, tooke nothing from the Church, but deceytfully put aside and withhelde part of their owne goods: what deathes and mischiefes doe not they deserue, which dare ryfle Churches by open force, and publike authoritie? Let vs in these things acknowledge the power of Iesus Christ, who, as he alwayes doth boughsafe to be mercifull to his Church, so will he not suffer hir to be beguiled, but will woorthily punish both hir professed enymies and persecutors, and also all hypocrites and deceyuers, that the sinceritie of true religion may be preserued: to him be prayse, honoz, power, & glozpe for euer. Amen.

The punishment of Sapphira, was the same, that Ananias had.

Ierem. 5.

Iob. 20.

The xxxiiij. Homelie.

AND great feare came on all the congregation, and as many as hearde it. By the handes of the Apostles were many signes and wonders shewed among the

the people. And they were all together with one accorde in Salomons porch. And of other durst no man ioyne himselfe to them. Neuerthelesse, the people magnified them. The number of them that beleueed in the Lord, both of men and women grewe more and more: in so much that they brought the sicke into the streetes, and layde them on the beddes and couches, that at the least waye the shadowe of Peter, when he came by, might shadowe some of them. There came also a multitude out of the Cities rounde about, vnto Ierusalem, bringing sicke folkes, and them which were vexed with vncleane spirites. And they were healed euery one.



We haue hearde the horrible example of Goddes iudgement, whereby Ananias and his wife Sapphira were punished with sodeyne death, both for that they falsly counterfeited a sayth in Christ, and al so went about to beguile the Church, in the goodes that were giuen for the reliefe of the poore. This example teacheth vs how great the seueritie of God is, in punishing of hypocrites, who as he cannot be deceyued, so can he not but be grienously offended with them that go about to beguile him. We haue sene also what a feruent desire was in the primitive Church, to conserue and mainteyne discipline, least eyther dissemblers or open malefactors shoulde craepe in, and cause the sayth of Christ eyther to be defamed or suspected. And to thintent all posteritie myght be enflamed to followe the same, this present place followeth, which rehearseth manye and singuler frutes of this example, whereto are adioyned the traueyles and exercises of the primitive Church, to thintent we maye learne by them, what we haue in these dayes to doe, if we desire to haue the kingdome of God enlarged, or Christ to be fauourable vnto vs.

First, Luke sayeth: And great feare came on all the congregation, and on as manye as hearde these thinges. Then the Christians feared as well as straungers, to whome the report of this thing came. And this was no vnprofitable feare, for by it, the godly were the more aware, and traueyled the more earnestly in Gods affayres: and the enimies durst doe the lesse against the Church, which they sawe had the spirite of God so manifestlye with them. This is the chiefe fruite of ecclesiasticall discipline, that it keepeth the godly in doing their dutie, and feareth the vngodly. Now a dayes bicause all men may doe what they will, the Churches being disordered by licentiousnesse of lyfe, become a praye to the enimies. Here must we also learne the vse of Gods iudgementes, which consisteth in this, that by them we learne Gods iustice, and being astrayde, amende our liues by the godly consideration thereof. God taught vs this vse, when he shewed Abraham the horrible destruction of Sodom, saying: I knowe that he will commaund his housholde, and his children after him, that they keepe the way of the Lord, and doe after right and conscience. And for this cause woulde he, that the presidentes of his iudgementes, shoulde be recorded in writing, and be reade in the Church both priuately and apertly, as Asaph testifieth: where he thus writeth: He made a couenant with Iacob, and gaue Israel a law: which he commaunded our forefathers to teache their children. That their posteritie might knowe it, and the children which were yet vnborne. To the intent that

when

Discipline
keepeth both
good and bad
in their duty.

The vse of
the iudgements
of
God.

Gene. 18.

Psal. 78.

when they grew vp, they might shew their children the same. That they might put their trust in God, and not to forget the woorkes of God, but to keepe his commaundementes. And not to be as their forefathers. &c. Therefore this bse of Gods iudgement whereby Ananias and Sapphiras dissimulation is punished, must also be now a dayes retained, that we may conceyue a true feare of God, and take hærde of hypocrisie, and worship God in spirite and truth, as Christ hath commaunded vs, yea, let all men be excited with this example, and applye vnto themselves whatsoeuer any where in hystories is written of this kinde, that by other mennes examples they maye learne what they haue to doe, if they meane to auoyde the wrath of God.

Secondlye, it is sayde of the Apostles, that by their ministerie many signes and woonders were shewed among the people. Wherby it appeareth the prayers of the faythfull were hearde also in this behalfe, which besought God that the Apostles might be endued with myracles, through the authoritie whereof they might be holpen in setting forth the kingdome of Christ. And they worke not only common myracles, but their power is extended so farre, that the diseased layde in the streete desire but the shadowe of Peter passing by, and thinke that it will helpe them. Nowe beginneth that saying of Christ to be fulfilled: He that beleueth in mee, the woorkes that I doe, he shall doe the same, and greater than these shall he doe. This is the second fruit of ecclesiasticall discipline, that God heareth the prayers of the Church, and encrease the gifts of his spirite, where contrarily, he abhorreth their prayers, which stop their eares at his lawe. This appeareth by hystories, which evidently declare, that the rarer giftes of the holy ghost, and working of myracles, began then to cease, when discipline beganne to ware dissolute, and corruption of maners encreased. Yet let no man thinke that superstition is here defended, by that is written of Peters shadowe, no more than by that we shall afterwarde heare of Pauls handkerche. Some vse thus to reason of this place. If Peters shadowe helped many, how much more shall his rayment and bones? And herof springeth all that confused Chaos of superstition, which we see is in pilgrimages, & about Saints reliques, whereof the most part be counterfeited. But we say that these myracles were not wrought to testifie eyther of Peter or Pauls power, but to confirme the preaching of the Gospell, whereof they were ministers. Therefore they serue to commend and set forth the Gospell, and sende men vnto Christ, whom vaine superstition hath hitherto entangled in trifles of no profite. Furthermore, we may more firmly reason of Peters wordes which we heard in the thirde chapter. There is more regarde with God of vertue and godlynesse, than is of garmentes, or of all mannes bodye: yea, the vertue and godlynesse of the Saints auayled nothing to the working of myracles. Therefore much lesse ought they to be ascribed to their garmentes, or to their bones. We will adde to this argument, howe in an other place it is sayd, that power went from Christ himselfe, not from his cote. But superstition will quickly fall, if we consider the ende and marke wherto all myracles are to be referred, and directed, which is of two sortes. First, it behoued that by them the doctrine of the Apostles shoulde be confirmed, as Christ himselfe teacheth. Whereupon we gather that he is to be beleued, and that now a dayes we neede no newe myracles. For if the Ministers preache the doctrine of the Apostles, that doctrine hath long sithence bene proued and confirmed

The myracles of the Apostles.

Prouer. 28.

Luke. 6. 8.

Math. 10.
Mark. 16.

Phil. 4.

1. Iohn. 3.

Gene. 3.

Math. 11.

Iohn. 6.

The exercises of the primitive Church.

Rom. 10.

firmed by miracles. And if they teach a doctrine not agreeable with that, they ought not to be receyued, though they worke neuer so many myzacles: forasmuch as myzacles are permitted to false and Antichristian teachers; to the end the fayth of the elect maye appeare the more manifest and euident. See Deuter. 13. Math. 24. 2. Thess. 2. The other ende and vse of myzacles is, to teach the knowledge of Iesus Christ, in whose name they were wrought by the Apostles, and Apostolike men. Diuers diseased with sicknesses and infirmities, are in Christes name healed, and with them some Demoniackes, whome the naughtie spirite of Satan did haunt. Therefore let vs acknowledge Iesus Christ to be he, which as sayeth the Prophete, hath bozne our diseases and infirmities, and he that healeth not onely our bodies, but also our soules. For we being bozne againe of his spirite and word, receiue fresh strength, so that we are able to do all things through his comfort. He only deliuereth vs from the tyranny of Satan. For he therefore came into the world as Iohn saith, to destroy the workes of the Deuill. And the first promise of saluation teacheth vs, that through his power and merite, the serpent's heade must be troden downe. Which to be done already, himselfe partly teacheth in the gospell, and partly the myzacles wrought in his name, abundantly testifie. And Luke sayth they were all healed in the name of Christ that were brought vnto the Apostles to be healed. Wherevpon we gather, that he is an vniuersall Sauour, who as he calleth all men vnto him that labour and are laden: euen so he excludeth none that come vnto him.

He adioyneth to the Apostles myzacles, the publike exercise of the whole Church, where he sayth: they all continued with one accorde in Salomons porch. Which is to be vnderstanded of their holy assemblies, as appeareth by the ende of the seconde Chapter, where there is mention made of houses, in which they brake breade. The Euangelist by this place meaneth none other thing, but that the faythfull had a speciall care to come vnto the Church, and there to be vnited together, not so much in bodies as in myndes, by fayth and charitie. Wherein they shewe vs an example of christian stoutnesse and constancie, who being not ignorant of the threates and decrees of the Counsell, woulde not yet for all that, refrayne from commynge among the congregation. Howbeit, it woulde haue sufficed mannes wisdom to haue kept their fayth in their myndes, and to haue communed of Christ with their faythfull brethren, wythin their priuate houses. And now a dayes many excuse their dastardynesse by these reasons, whereby they account the confession of Christ amongst indifferent thinges, and suffer Princes by their decrees and lawes to wzing and wrest it from them, yea, it is thought a poynt of prudence in tyme of daunger to dissemble our fayth, to intermit commynge to the Church, and all Sacraments, eyther vnto the Church, or else to meddle with articles in controuersie, or else to make a hypocrites hole of them, or else wholye to denye the fayth. But what yll ende the successes of this wisdom hath, the Church findeth not without great griefe, and the destruction of manye. They doe muche better which haue learned of Christes wordes, that confession can not be seperated from fayth. For with the heart we beleeue vnto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made vnto saluation. And it is Christes saying: Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my wordes in this adulterous and sinfull generation, of him also

also shall the sonne of man be ashamed, when he commeth in the glory of his father, with the holy Aungels. Let vs consider that it is not without a cause that mention is so often made of comming to the Church. For, hereof we gather, that the Church can by no meanes stande wythout these assemblies, both bicause of publike prayers, which Christ hath commended to vs, not without a peculiar promyse, and also to preuent false teachers, whose propertie Paule wyrteth, is to go into houses, and to bring into bondage women laden with sinne, and all such as lye open to their craftynesse. And that no man shoulde take occasion to trouble or breake so necessary an order, Christ himselfe neuer shunned comming to the Church, but taught therein openly, and by that argument proueth, that he ought to be taken neyther for schismaticke, nor false teacher. And for this cause it seemeth that the first belæuers abhorred not the Jewes temple, bicause they had no more commodious place in all the Citie. The Anabaptistes are confuted by this example, a fanaticall broode and kinde of seditious people, which thinke it vnlawfull to come within our Churches, and in our congregati- on, and haue a great warynesse that they be not polluted with them, where notwithstanding it seemeth to them but a trifle, to make a schisme in the Church of Christ, which is the most horrible and detestable crime that is.

But let vs returne to the discipline, and exercises of the primitive Church, amongst which in the thirde place is contained a certaine maiestie, that made the enimies afrayde of them, and all the people to reuerence them. For Luke sayth: Of other durst no man ioyne himselfe vnto them. But the people magnified them. Which is to be vnderstanded of those which were not vtterly godlesse, and voyde of all religion, and yet were ledde with the carke and cares of the worlde, and the fleshe. For when they had seene the horrible and unhappie ende of Ananias and Sapphira, they were afrayde to ioyne themselues to the company of those that punished hypocrisie so seuerely, their consciences well knowing their owne imperfection. Therfore the societie and company of the Church, was from thence forth the purer, into the which perhaps at the first, many such as Ananias was, had craftily crept in, yet these men in the meane season, had a good opinion of them, and published theyr prayses abroad, bicause they sawe a certayne kinde of heauenly and Aungelike lyfe shine in them. Diuers lyke examples of them maye we reade in hystories. And vnder Traian the Emperour, the Christians lyfe was so vnblameable, that where he intended to persecute them, at the intreatie of Plinius Secundus, who was one of the iudges, they were let alone and not medled with. Thys place teacheth vs two things, most worthy to be obserued. First that the Church consisteth onely of faythfull persons, and such as are true christians, and that lying hypocrites can haue no place therein. For where Christ is the king of truth (as he testified before Pylate) he can not abyde nor suffer lyers and hypocrites. And in the Gospell he sayth, they shall be put out from the maryage, which come in without the wedding garment. In an other place, he adiudgeth them to eternall damnation, with the fearefull and vnbeleeuing, and the abhominable, and murtherers, and whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolators. Secondly, we learne what getteth christians authoritie and fauour with men, berilye when they aunswere to their vocation, and lyeue a lyfe aunswerable to the name of Christ, whereby God our heauenly father may be glorified. For

Marc. 8.

2. Tim. 3.

Iob. 18.

The maiestie
of those that
be vnfayned
Christians.

Plinius the
yonger in his
epistles, Ter-
tullian in his
Apologie for
Christians,
whome Euse-
bius cyteth in
the .iii. booke
of his history
cha. 32. 33.

Math. 22.

Adoc. 21.

Math. 5.

Am. i.

that

1. Sam. 2.

The Church
is increased
by persecu-
tions.

Iohn. 3.

Psal. 110.

Math. 16.

The king-
dome of
Christ sprea-
deth to them
neare vnto
Jerusalem.

zach. 4.

that that God sayde vnto Heli the priest, by his Prophete, shall alwayes stand firme and ratified. Them that worship me, will I worship, and they that despise me shall come to shame. Which things if we would diligently consider, it should easily appeare, howe it commeth to passe, that the name of the Gospell in these dayes is euerywhere enuyed, and the professors thereof for the most part are hated and slandered. Our vnbrideled and dissolute lyfe deserueth it, whereby vnder a pretence of the gospell, we burst into all vngodlynnesse, and we which would seeme holier than all others, doe passe all other almost in lycentious luying. Let vs amende these things, and we shall quickly proue the Church shall be reuerenced agayne, as she was wont. Fourthly he sayth, that there was daylie added to the Church newe christians, as well men as women, which were indued with true fayth, and were moued therunto by the holy ghost. Thys teacheth vs howe baine the attemptes of Christes enuyes are, seeing they that had the supremacy in the Citie of Jerusalem, were not able to hynder the growth of the Church nowe springing. For as Christ sayth: The winde bloweth where it will, and is subiect to no mans pleasure or appointment. And dyuers examples teach vs, that the Church in tyme of persecutions alwaye increased, rather than diminished. For this is the propertie of Christ, to beare rule in the middest of his enemies. Let no man therefore be feared, with the manaces of wicked enemies, as though it were in their power to ouerthrowe the Church. For it is buylt vpon Christ, against whome the gates of Hell cannot preuaile.

Besides this, the kingdome of Christ beginneth to be spreade abroad in the Cities nigh adioynning. For the fame of these myracles being caried to and fro, caused a great manye to bring their sicke and demoniacke people to Jerusalem, and by that occasion, they came to the knowledg of Christ. The chiefe vse of this place is to make vs in these dayes vnderstande, by what meanes Christes kingdome may be enlarged. Wherein they which vnder the cloke of the Gospell, followe carnall wisdom, and haue not yet subdued the same, to the obedyence of faith, take dyuers consultations. For there be some, that thinke it best for the faythfull to serue the time, to graunt many things, and to winke at other, vntill the worlde maye looke with an other countenance, and their mindes beare calmer, which now hate the truth. Other agayne, turning to carnall defences, thinke good by confederacie and fight, to bring the matter to passe. But the successe of things proueth both these sortes to be farre wyde and deceyued. For this is Gods businesse, and can be brought to passe with none other power and strength than his: Neyther thorow an hoste of men, neyther thorow strength, but thorowe my spirite, as the Lorde sayth by his Prophete. And agayne: I will saue them in the Lord their God, and I will not saue them by bow, nor sword, nor by battayle, nor by horse, nor by horsemen. &c. We knowe in dede sometime that he vseth the ministerie of Princes and men, and warre, as the examples of the Machabees, of Constantine, and Theodosius doe testifie, but euen then he so moderateth the matter, that the power of his spirite, sheweth it selfe in the middle of these thinges, and hath onely the preheminencie. Therefore let as many as consult how to haue the Church mainteyned and the kingdome of Christ aduanced, regarde him onely. For when they go about to bring the matter to passe by mans counsell and defence,

fence, there will not God worke any longer. Therefore let vs continue in the exercises of the primitive Church, such as Luke hitherto hath rehearsed. Let the teachers constantly preach the doctrine of truth, & not suffer themselves to be plucked from the same, considering it hath bene confirmed by so many myracles, let them that will be taken for christians, earnestly harken to the same, and let them ioyne continuall prayers to the studie of the worde, for as much as without Gods secreete working, nothing can be brought to passe. Let the authoritie of Ecclesiasticall discipline be in force, that neyther hypocrites, nor open naughtie packes, may haue any place in the Church. Let the studie of loue, and liberalitie toward the poore, raigne amongst vs, that the household of fayth through our couetousnesse, be not gased on, like publike stages of beggerie. Bycause these thinges now a dayes, are not onely neglected, but also peruered, it is no marueyle, that we see so little fruite of the doctrine of the gospell. Let vs therefore settle our selues herevnto, with all our hartes, and our Lorde, and sauour Iesus Christ wyll helpe our studies and endeoures: to whome be praise, honor, glory and power for ever. Amen.

The. xxxv. Homelie.

THE N the chiefe priest rose vp, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees, and were full of indignation, and layde handes on the Apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the Aungell of the Lorde by night opened the prison doores and brought them forth, and saide: Goe and stande, and speake in the temple to the people all the wordes of this life. When they heard that, they entred into the Temple early in the morning, and taught.



In that Oracle of Dauid the King and Prophet, saying that Christ should reigne in the midst of hys enemies, is verie wonderfull. Hereof we gather that Christ shall rule in thys worlde, yet so, as he shall neuer want those, that shall go aboute to subuert and ouerthrowe his Kingdome. Examplis hereof we may euerie where see in the Scriptures, and Ecclesiasticall Hystories. But most manifest-

Psal. no.

lye of all others, is it sene in thys present Booke, where, in the report of the Apostles actes and description of the primitive Church, Luke alwayes ioyne these two thinges togyther (that is to say) the successe of Christes kingdome, and the furious rage of the vngodly against the same. These thinges serue to the ende that we should neyther be offended at the Crosse and aduersitie, whereof Christ so often tymes hath gauen vs warning, neyther hope for anye continuall peace and tranquillitie of the Church in thys worlde, but that we should enen then prepare our selues to the crosse, when the Church seemeth to be most in safetie. Wherevnto thys present hystorie is chiefly to be referred. For Luke a little before, setteth forth vnto vs a flourishing state of the Church, shewing vs what authoritie it grewe in, and how it increased day by day, in so much that the Citie of Ierusalem was now to little to conteyne the kingdome of Christ, be-

cause it began to be carped abroad among straunge Nations. But among these so many and prosperous proceedings, there foloweth a grieuous persecution and great daunger, bicause Christ gaue his enimies such power that they layde handes on the Apostles and put them in prison, thinking also to put them vnto death. Yet these things serue more to comfort vs, than to feare vs, bicause the Lorde so presently helped the Apostles, being in daunger, for the glozie of his name. But that we maye receaue the more vtilitie and profite hereby, first we must consider the enimies of Christ and the Apostles. Then howe the Lorde did elude and frustrate their enterprise. And last of all, we will declare what the Apostles did, after they were deliuered from the perill they were in.

1. The enimies & persecutours of the Church.

1. Cor. 15.

Luke wryteth diligently of the enimies and persecutours of the church, and of their enterprises. For he sayth, the high priest rose vp agaynst the Apostles, and not he alone, but all his complottes and fellowes, and they that were his nearest friendes and familiars, and these (sayth he) were of the Sadduceyes secte, that we may perceauie what corruption raigned nowe among the Jewes, when they were supream heads of the Church, to whome the resurrection of the dead (which is the chiefe article of our fayth and religion) seemed but a game and pastime, as we haue often tymes declared. And surely, if they had not bene bitterly boyde of all religion, eyther the sinceritie of the Apostles doctrine, or the reuerente maiestie of the congregation, or the wonderfull worthynesse of myracles, and so great concurrence of all sortes of people to the kingdome of Christ, might haue moued them lesse to haue raged. But Luke declareth also what incensed them. For he sayth they were full of zeale, that is, enuie and indignation. For they could not abyde them to be had in pryncesse and estimation, by whose doctrine they honoꝝ and aduantage was defaced. Yet is it no doubt, but they made the zeale of God, and the publike commoditie of all the people, to be the pretence of their priuate affections, as we reade Caiaphas and his complottes did before. Wherevnto came this zeale? so farre that they layde hands on the Apostles, and commaunded them to the common gayle, as breakers of publike peace, and open malefactours. These things must be applyed to our tymes also, bicause it is manifest al things are wrytten for our sakes, that we may haue enstruction, and comfort thereby.

Rom. 15.

From the companie of the Priests, come the greatest enimies of the truth.

1. The. 2.

1. Iohn. 1.

First this example teacheth vs, who are alwayes like to be the greatest persecutours of Christes truth. Truly, they which glorie in the tytle of Priesthode, and will be taken for the chiefe heades of the Church, and ought chiefly to maintaine, and preach the truth. But as soone as vnder pretence of Religion, they beginne to seeke their owne gayne and lucre, then can they neyther beleue themselves, nor yet suffer the light of the truth whose brightnesse discloseth their naughtynesse, and deceit. And such for the most parte are these Sadduceis, yea the Dogges of Epicures hearde. For vnlesse they thought the thinges wrytten in Scripture touching Heauen and Hell, the immortalitie of the soules, and the resurrection of the deade, more vaine than fables: they woulde neuer neyther so wickedly corrupte the scriptures, with their traditions, nor yet so impudently turne religion into priuate lucre and aduantage. Therefore Christ and the Apostles, shewe vs how Antichrists place and Sea, should be euen in the very church that we might perceyue from whence most daunger were to be looked for

and

and feared. And if we well marke these tymes, it shall appeare they onely haue bene the enimies of the doctrine of the Gospell, and kingdome of Christ, which heretofore haue bene thought to be the chiefe heades of the Church. For it is euident that the matters attempted by Princes and Kings, were done for their sakes, and by their procurement and instigation. This thing offendeth many in these daies, and make them thinke that the doctrine in our Churches is not the truth, bycause the Popes and Bishoppes are enimies thereto. But great folly it is to be offended with that which hath bene the most vsuall and common thing, since the worlde beganne, as other whers hath bene declared.

But we must as diligently consider wryth what craft, and weapons these men fight. Where first is to be noted howe egregiouslye they can counterfaite the zeale of God, whose glorie they lament to be troden vnder foote, and his Church to be so daungerously deuided. But this is but a corrupt zeale, as we see in Caiaphas, to whome the confession of truth which Christ vttered, seemed blasphemous and intollerable. So, nothing seemeth so impious and intollerable to these our heades, as that that tasteth of the truth of the Gospell, and is repugnant to their proude tyrannye and aduantage. And it appeareth euen by this place, that we ought to haue no better iudgement of the zeale of our enimies, bicause that as the Bishops of the Jewes, coulde beare with the madde errorrs of the Saduceyes, so they woulde helpe to bring downe Christ: so these men can beare with the wicked sale and marte of holye things, condemned by the Popes owne Canons, with the scorning of Gods doctrine, with horrible periurpe, whoredome, and all kinde of vnbrydled lyuing, so that those things that pertaine to their vaine glory, and aduantage, might be left alone & vntouched. But to graunt them, that in dede, they haue a zeale to the glory of God, yet can they not be excused, but are lyke vnto the Jewes, which as Paule sayth, had a zeale of God, but yet were voyde of all knowledge and truth. For GOD will not haue vs followe our owne zeale, but his worde, which for this cause he hath wilsafed to reueale to all ages, to the intent no man should followe the suggestions of the flethe, and wisdomie of man. But what maner of zeale these men had, may be iudged by the successe of the thing. For they that were Stewardest of the worde of God, and ought with argumentes of Scripture, to haue brought them that erred into the waye, and to haue conuincd the gaynesayers, as men hauing forgotten their dutie, turne vnto force, and shut them in the common prison, which as yet were conuicted of no fault or crime. And this is it that Christ layde to their charge, when they came out armed with swordes and Clubbes, to take him whom they dayly hearde teaching in the Temple, where he ought to haue bene conuincd, if he had taught any thing repugnaunt to Gods truth. Naye, they vled open force, euen in their Counsell, in that they suffer the high Priestes seruaunt to strike Christ on the cheek without check. Histories declare howe they haue fought these many yeares with the same weapons, agaynst the doctrine of truth. Neyther neede we to heape many examles together, bicause that one fact of the Counsell at Constance is sufficient, which the heades of the Romaine Church commytted agaynst that holy martyr of Christ Iohn Husse, whome neyther his safe conduyct, neyther the Emperours maiestie, neyther lawe of armes, neyther intreatie

The crafts of
the enimies
of truth.

Rom. 10.

Luke. 22.

Iohn. 18.

of

of the godlye, nor threates of the Bohemians, coulde deliuer out of their bloody handes. And our maisters and Bishops in these dayes, vse no argumentes more often against the Teachers of the truth, than to arme Princes against the same, and those that teache it, and then thinke they are notable defenders of the Church, when they persecute the true Church of Christ with fire and sword. To speake nothing in the meane season of such as save the examination and hearing of these matters, appertaine nothing to Princes, and so hale they the martyrs of Christ to their execution, without hearing their cause, first cutting out their tongues, bicause they shall not declare their fayth and cause of their death, to the people looking on. But howe farre these men passe the tyrannie of the Jewishe Bishops: so much more grievous shall that punishment be that Christ hath ordeyned for them, whose kingdome can be oppressed by no force of man.

2. God dis-
appointeth
his enemies
purpose, and
delivereth
hys.

This doth the other part of the storie declare, wherein is shewed what the Lord did in the meane whyle, who myght seeme to haue cast of all care of his Church, and suffered his enemies to long. But he neyther sleepeth nor forsaketh those that be in daunger, for his sake. For the Aungell of the Lorde came, who neyther feared the authoritie of the Priestes, nor yet the lawe for breaking the prison, but openeth the doores, bringeth out the Apostles, and commaundeth them to returne to the Temple, & there to preach the wordes of lyfe, that is to saye, the Gospell of Jesus Christ, in whome only lyfe is to be had. These thinges teache vs, howe God hath a care for those that be his, and that his worde cannot be bounde, although his Ministers lye bounde in prison. For the breath of God breatheth where it will, and is not subiect to the iudgement of the worlde. And Paule sayth that he lyeth bounde, but that the worde of God cannot be bounde. Let no man therefore be offended with the imprisonment of the Ministers of Goddes worde, no not with their death, seeing the setting forth of his worde dependeth not of vs, but of the pleasure and power of God. It shall be good, more diligently to consider the maner and ende of this deliuey.

2. Timo. 2.

The Angels
are the Min-
isters & kee-
pers of the
elect.

In their deliuey this is chiefly to be obserued, that God would haue the prison doores opened, by the ministerie of an Aungell, which he myght many other wayes haue brought to passe. But God woulde this waye testifie and declare the great dignitie of his elect, whereas not onely the inferior and earthly creatures, but also the heavenly spirites and Aungels, are appoynted to doe them seruice. We are taught by manye places of Scripture, to gather a generall rule hereof. Paule verily teacheth vs that the Aungels are ministering spirites, sent out for the seruice of them, which shall be heyres of saluation. And that saying of Dauid is well knowen: The Aungell of the Lorde tarieth rounde about them that feare him, and deliuereth them. And that which the malignaunt Tempter expoundeth of Christ only, is to be referred to euery one of his members, whome God hath commended to the charge and custodie of the Aungels, that they shoulde not dash their foote agaynst a stone. And there wanteth not examples of them which haue bene holpen by the visible ministerie of Aungelles. Loth was deliuered from the burning of Sodome by the aungelles. Iacob seeth an hoste of Aungelles, and percepueth himselfe in safetie by their ayde and succour. Whole armies of Aungels deliuer Elizeus out of the handes of the Asirians. Daniel confesseth the Aungell of the Lorde did shutte the mouthes of the

Hebr. 1.

Psal. 34.

Psal. 91.

Gene. 19.

Gene. 32.

2. Reg. 6.

Daniel. 6.

the Lyons, that they coulde doe him no hurt. An Aungell many daies faithfully serued Thobias sonne, in visibill shape and likenesse. An Aungell smiteth the first bozne of the Egyptians, and guideth the people of Israel through the wilderness. And it appeareth Ezechias was deliuered from the siege of the Assirians, by the helpe of an Aungell. These examples and such other lyke, are rehearsed, not to thende we also shoulde require the ministerie of Aungels, in visibill wyse, but that we shoulde not doubt of their ayde and helpe, although they appeare not to vs. We manye times finde this true, when we be deliuered from secreete daungers, and so escape vnknewen ieperdies, without all counsell or helpe of man. Let vs therefore acknowledge the dignitie of our nature and condicion, wherein we be set through the benefite of Gods grace. Let the same serue for our comfort, that we despayre not in aduersitie, and for our instruction, that we offend not through our impure and naughty life the Aungels, and so driue from vs so holy and necessary a succor and defence.

Furthermore, the Aungell sheweth the ende why they are deliuered, where he saith to the Apostles, being brought out of prison: Go and stand, and speake in the Temple, all the wordes of this lyfe to the people. He appoynteth them therefore to returne to the execution of that office and charge, that Christ had put them in, and commaundeth them to their vttermoost power, to set forth the kingdome of Christ, whose ayde and helpe they nowe presently had proued. This agreeth with Goddes commaundement in other places, that being deliuered out of any distresse, we shoulde glorifie him. For this was not spoken onely to the Apostles, but appertayneth indifferently to all men. For God will haue all men diligently to applye their vocation, and being deliuered out of daunger, to returne thereunto with the more feruencie, the longer they haue intermitted it. Therefore their offence is grievous, which being deliuered from sicknesse, or pouertie, or other kinde of calamitie, giue themselves vnto vice and naughtyenesse, and pollute the name of God with impuritie of lyfe, who seme vnto me to be lyke those souldiours, which being sent out to take Christ, when they were cast to the grounde by his secreete power, yet when they were permitted to ryse agayne, layde handes on him, and bounde him. And their offence is not much lesse, who when they haue once or twyse bene in daunger for the name of Christ, as though nowe they had done all their dutie, shunne all daungers that after may ensue, and auoyde all trouble that maye betyde vs, for Christes sake. And yet there be that offende more grievously than these, who to keepe themselves out of daunger, feare not to denye the truth. But we shoulde after Pauls example finish our race and course. For it is not in our power to appoynt our selues an ende of our labours and traueyle, but we must abide the pleasure of the Lorde, who although he deferre his helpe for a season, yet will he not fayle them that firmly and constantly trust in him. And he is not meete for the kingdome of Christ, which hauing once set his hande to the plough, looketh backe agayne, but he shall be safe that continueth to the ende.

It is chiefly to be noted, how the Aungell calleth the Gospell of Iesus Christ, the worde of life. It is adourned with diuers other names in the Scripture. For it is called the worde of grace, bicause it declareth the grace of God giuen vs in Christ. Paule calleth it the word of reconciliation, bicause

Dani. 6.

Esay. 37.

The ende of
deliuerce.

Psal. 50.

Abac. 2.

Luc. 9.

Math. 24.

The Gospell
is the worde
of lyfe.

2. Cor. 5.

Rom. 1.

1. Pet. 1.

Esay. 40.

Iohn. 6.

Rom. 8.

Eph. 1.

3. The Apo-
stles obey the
Gungell.

Num. 15.

2. Cor. 10.

Rom. 1. 16.

bicause of Christ, who hath reconcyled God the father vnto vs. He also testi-
fieth, that it is the power of god vnto saluation. In another place it is called
the worde of truth, and saluation. But this is the excellentest name, where
it is called the worde of lyfe, which is the proper and peculiar name belon-
ging to it. For both that immortall worde liueth and raygneth for euer,
and giueth life to al men, which bouchsafe to embrace it with true faith. For
it preacheth to vs Jesus Christ, which only hath the words of eternall lyfe.
It sheweth vs and giueth vs in him all thinges necessarie for our lyfe. In
him we haue forgiuenesse of our sinnes, satisfaction, righteousnesse, sanc-
tification, pryre of our redemption, and whatsoeuer other lyke. And this
worde doth not onely regenerate vs into the sonnes of God by fayth in
him, but also giueth vs being nowe regenerated, the spirite of adoption, by
whome we crye Abba father, which is the infallible pledge of our saluati-
on. And for this cause the doctrine of the Gospell, excelleth all the wisdomē
of the world, bicause it is the guide of eternall lyfe, where the professors of
other sciences, cannot safely promise vs the safety of this present life. Ther-
fore it is truly compared to a most precious pearle, and to an incomparable
treasure, for whose cause all men that desire true saluation, ought willing-
ly to lose and bestowe all their goodes. Agayne, bicause for Christes sake,
who is lyfe and saluation, the Gospell is adourned with so singuler a title,
all those doctrines ought to be reputed for deadly and pestiferous, that ob-
scure the merite of Christ, and pull mennes mindes from the fayth in him.
Which doctrines whosoever professe, they are theues and murderers,
both for that they robbe Christ of his glozve, and also for that in steede of the
worde of lyfe, they giue vnto the simple followers thereof, the deadly poi-
son of mannes traditions.

But let vs returne to the Apostles, who as Luke writeth, obeyed the
Aungelles commaundement, and by and by in the morning went into the
Church, and preached there. Yet many things might haue perswaded them
the contrary, both bicause of the late daunger they had bene in, and the tri-
ed power of their aduersaries, which they knewe woulde no waye swoner
be prouoked, than with their preaching of the Gospell. Furthermore, by
this fact of theirs, they myght seme to bring all the congregation besides
in daunger, in kindling their enemies rage with fresh matter. But so little
are they hereby let from their purpose, that without further deliberation
taking, they obeye the commaundement of God. Their obedience is sette
forth for an example to vs. For it is a generall rule of God, that we doe not
that which seemeth good in our owne sight, but that we fulfill his commaun-
dement. And there is no greater nor more hurtfull plague, than to take our
fleshe to counsell, where God hath expessed his will by playne commaun-
dement: which thing, the example both of Saule and others, abundantly de-
clare. And Paule many times witnesseth, that the obedience of fayth is the
marke and ende of preaching the gospel. Therefore whosoever cast this obe-
dience away, and harken to the counsailes of the flesh, surely they glorie but
in vaine in the Gospell and fayth of Christ. Wherefore, let vs applye the ex-
ample of the Apostles to our selues, and let vs diligently execute that thing
that God hath commaunded vs, not regarding the tyrannie of the world,
and then Jesus Christ shall not fayle of his helpe and succour in our godly
enterprises: to whom be praise, honor, glozve and power for euer. Amen.

The

The. xxxvj. Homelie.

But the chiefe Priest came, and they that were with him, and called a Counsell togyther, and all the Elders of the children of Israel, and sent men to the prison to fet them. When the Ministers came, and founde them not in the prison: they returned and tolde, saying: The prison truly founde we shut with al diligence, and the keepers standing without before the dores. But when we had opened, we found no man within. When the chiefe Priest, and the ruler of the Temple, and the high Priestes hearde these things, they doubted of them, wherevnto this woulde growe. Then came one and shewed them. Beholde, the men that you put in prison, stande in the Temple, and teache the people. Then went the Ruler of the Temple with Ministers, and brought them without violence, for they feared the people, lest they shoulde haue bene stoned.



When that King and holy Prophete Dauid purposed to describe the kingdome of our Redemer and Sauour Iesus Christ, taking his beginning of the furious attemptes of wicked enimies against the same, he sayth: why doe the heathen so furiously rage togyther, and why doe the people ymagine a vayner thing? The Kings of the earth stande vp, and the Rulers take Counsell togyther agaynst the Lorde, and agaynst his annoynted? Let vs breake their bandes a sunder, and cast awaye their cordes from vs. He that dwelleth in heauen, shall laugh them to scorne. The Lorde shall haue them in derision. Then shall hee speake vnto them in his wrath, and vexe them in his sore displeasure. Whereby we are taught that the attemptes of Chyistles enimies, are not only bayne, but also ridiculous, and to no men more daungerous than to the authoꝝ, and beginners thereof. Many ensamples of such attempts might we bring forth, amongst which, this is one of the chiefe that our holpe wyter Luke now proponeth. For the Apostles were apprehended at the counsell and instigation of the Bishoppes, and were put in the common prison, not onely vnder locke and keye, but also are safely kept with watch and warde. The next daye after in the morning, the Bishops come togyther, and call an assembly or counsell, consulting which waye they maye quench the fire of the Gospell. But the Lorde from aboue laughing at them, and meaning to make all the worlde laugh at them, by the helpe of one Aungell, deliuereth the Apostles out of prison, and marueylously eludeth the counsell of their enimies, who thought themselues craftie and wply yndough. But bicause it seemed good to the holy ghost, to describe all the partes of this hystorie: we also must thinke no studie or diligence to much, to search them out, bicause we maye receyue much profite by our traueyle therein.

First therefore, let vs consider the Counsell, to the which we sayd they busily addressed and hyed themselues: the circumstances whereof beyng considered, we shall perceyue all things declaring a shew and countenance of a lawfull Counsaile. The chiefe in the Counsaile is the high Priest, who in these cases was appoynted of God, to haue the highest authoritie, and who by Goddes apoyntment was most to be obeyed. For sentence of

Psal. 2.

1. They vse
pretence of a
Counsell as
gaynst the A-
postles.

An. j.

death

Deut. 17.

Num. 11.

Of Counsels

Zach. 12.

Iohn. 2.

Math. 21.

Apoc. 21.

death was long ago giuen against them, which durst obstinately despise the Priestes saying. To him be adioyned the other Priestes, least anye man might thinke the Bishop did any thing of his priuate affection. And least any man also might suspect the whole order of Priests, the Elders were also called, the institution of which order, was long befoze appoynted of God, and represented the forme of the whole Church. Furthermore, they take vnto them the Capitaine of the Temple, with the other publike Officers, that bicause they woulde seeme to doe nothing against the common weale. These things being thus ordeyned, what letteth nowe that this should not be a Counsell lawfully gathered together? Surely touching outward appearance, you can easily require none other thing. But if a man regarde the ende of all this doing, it shall appeare they were not gathered together by the holy ghost, but by the instigation of Satan, and that therefore no good or godly person ought to obey or submit himselfe to them. For they assembled together to oppresse the truth, and they go about to ouerthrowe the kingdome of Christ by conspiracie.

This place teacheth vs to iudge of counsailes, which are now a daies, in euery mans mouth, bicause manye suppose, controuerlies of religion, can not be decyded wythout a generall counsaile. Touching whose opinion, as I will not now dispute, so it seemeth to me it would be very profitable, if such a free and generall counsell might be obteyned, wherein all controuerlies might be concluded, by the onely worde of God, such as was the Synode of the Apostles, whereof shall be spoken in the .xv. chapter, and such as we knowe, those olde counsailes were of Nicæa, Constantino-ple, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, and such other as the godly Emperours, by their authoritie gouerned and ruled, least the ambition of Bishops might kindle more cōtention. But whether we may hope for any such like, in these dayes, I can not easily tell, bicause I see, none of the contrary parte, contented to forsake their possession of the Church wrongfully vsurped, nor wylling to submit themselves to the iudgement of others. Agayne, if we consider, what counsels haue bene, these many yeres, since the Bishops of Rome gate the supremacie, ouer the Church, no man that is in his right wits, can looke for any goodnesse to come of them, bicause they obserue not so much as any outward shewe of a lawfull counsaile. For to beginne with the chiefe poynt: Their counsailes vse to be summoned and called, by the Bishops of Rome, whose supremacie is not ordeyned of God, and is most contrarie to the glorie of Christ. They also will be the chiefe rulers, Presidents and Judges of the counsell, which ought rather to plete their cause, and to gyue an account of their stewardship, which many yeres now hath bene requyred of them. They haue Bishops sytting which them, not such as Paule requyret, but such as the God on earth vseth to create: from whome, if a man take their pienshe and stage play apparell, and bayne names and tytles, they shall haue nothing left, that representeth any shew of Bishoply duetie, or dignitie. And they onely haue authoritie to gyue sentence, which are not worthy, the lowest rowme in the Church, but are by Gods sentence, long since excommunicated. For the Prophet affirmeth, that the Chanaanites, that is to say, sellers of holpe thinges, shall haue no place in the Lordes house. And such as they, did Christ long since dyspue out of the Jewish temple. And Christ sayth in his reuelation, that Infidels,

Murderers,

Murtherers, Whoremongers, Wytches, Idolaters and all lyers, haue their place prepared in the lake burning with fyre and Brymstone. And who I pray you, is so impudent, that will denie, but a many of them are polluted with these byces, which yet haue onely the power and authoritie to iudge matters of religion. And although they vse to call Emperours, kings and princes to their counsaile, it skilleth not bicause it is euident, they haue all swozne obedience to the Pope, and are not accounted for Catholikes, onlesse they giue by themselves wholly to the Sea of Rome. Wherefore, thys outward shewe representeth no labofull counsaile, but with a bayne visage, beguyleth the simple and vnwarie. And if a man marke the ende, wherevnto they referre all thing, it shall appeare moze plainely, that they seeke onely the oppressing of the truth and the ghospell, than needeth with many words to be declared. For this doth the bloud of the Martyrs of Christ testifie, which they haue shed, and most greedily thirst after. The warres whereof they haue bene the first authoꝝ, agaynst the mainteyners of the true fayth, doe proue the same. They confesse the same in their Bulles, wherby they summon and call counsellors. For they so burne in hatred of the truth, that where they are wholly couered with hypocrisie, and furnished at all points, to cloke and dyssemble all things: yet can they herein little or nothing dyssemble, their great hatred, but openly professe, that which they long ago, haue conceyued against the Ghospell. Therefore let them that desyre the ouerthrowe of Christes church and kingdome, and will wittingly perishe, submit matters of fayth and religion to their iudgement. But whosoever hath a care of his owne saluation, of the glorie of Christ, and safetie of the Church, let him vnderstande, that this saying of Dauid chiefly belongeth to this place: Blessed is that man, that hath not walked in the counsell of the vngodly, nor stande in the way of sinners, and hath not sitte in the seate of the scornefull.

Apoca. 21.

Psalm. 1.

2. God disap-
pointeth the
enterpryses of
his enemies.

But let vs let passe these matters, and come to the priestes and Elders, who hauing consulted, about the Apostles, sende their seruants to the prison, to bring them before the counsell. And here the Lorde agaynst whom they stroue, doth marueylously mocke and deryde them. For the seruants finde the Apostles deliuered out of prison. They retorne to their maysters, and so declare the matter, that they manifestly set forth Gods helpe, and the myraculous deliuerie of the Apostles. For they say, they finde the prison close shutte, and the keepers diligently watching, and yet no man in the prison. What other could be hereof gathered, but that this was the worke of God: For who was able so to haue beguyled the keepers, and brought out the Apostles, without their knowledg? They are therefore not without a cause wonderfully vexed in their minde, and wote not what to doe. For they feele the prickes of conscience, which vse to take holde, even on the wickedst. But there cometh an other message, that moze moueth and grieueth them. For there cometh one, that telleth them how the Apostles, are openly and boldly teaching in the Church, which could not but be occasion of great grieve, to such ambitious men, perceauing that their authoritie was neyther regarded, nor their power feared. This example teacheth vs, howe easie a thing it is for God, to frustrate the wicked attempts of his enemies. For who would haue thought the Apostles could haue bene brought out of the prison, without the knowledg of the keepers?

An. ij.

But

Iohn. 7.

Math. 28.

Exodus. 8.

Numer. 23.
and. 24.

3. The
Apostles are
brought back
again before
the counsell.

The blinde-
nesse of the
wicked is in-
curable.

But that which seemeth impossible to man, is as easie to God, as the dust to be scattered with the winde. For he is able to beguile them, whom it seemeth, no man can beguile eyther by sleape, eyther by benumbing of senses, eyther by giddinesse of head, or many other wayes. Furthermore, they haue them to witnesse and declare the myracle, whose helpe they thought to vse in oppressing the truth. Therefore the same thing happeneth here vnto them, that did at the first, when they sent their seruantes to take Christ, and they returned agayne, not onely without him, but also gaue a notable testimonie of hys doctrine. Wher vnto that testimonie was not vn- lyke, that the souldiours gaue of Christes resurrection, whome they there- fore hyred to watch his graue, bicause he should not rise agayne. Lyke ex- amples we reade euery where in the scripture. Pharao went about to op- presse and destroye the children of Israell. And yet he brought hym vp in his owne house, and set him on his lap, whome God had appointed to be the delyuerer and reuenger of his people. Afterwarde, when he set the Magitians agaynst Moses, he hearde them openly testifie, that the finger of God wrought by Moses. And this is also like where Balaam hyred by the king of Moabytes, to curse the people of Israell, was enforced, whether he would or no, to blesse them. What shall we speake of Achab, who most cruelly persecuting the Prophetes of God, cherished and reuerenced the most faythfull Patrone of the Prophetes, and the verie onely Mecenas of those dayes, amongst the Lordes of his Court? I omit infinite examples of lyke sort, which might be brought both out of later, and aunient hy- stories, besides those, whereof we haue daylie experience, I thought good to admonishe the faythfull seruants of Christ, by these onely, that they might diligently marke and obserue the lyke. For great and verie profitable is the vse of these examples. For first, they comfort vs in aduersitie, in that we see mannes power farre inferiour to Gods, and that mannes enterprises, can not hynder the purpose of God. Next, they profite vs to frame our lyfe after, that we rashely withstande not Gods prouidence and ordynaunces. For what is impossible to God, which in times past, so merueylously did frustrate and disappoint the attempts of the men in the beginning, with the wonderfull diuision of tongues, and not so fewe tymes as once, by the ministerie of one Angell only, made kinges and princes to be laughed at of all men. Wherfore, to humble our selues vnder his mightie hand, is both safest and profitablest for our helth and saluation.

Further, let vs consider the priestes, and other that satte in thys coun- sell, which yet haue not learned to gyue place vnto God, and not content, that their folly is now opened to all men, theroe yet an incurable impietie of minde. For the Captaine of the Temple being sent by them, bringeth the Apostles without anye resistaunce, before the counsell, absteyning in dede from vyolence, not that the consideration of Gods worke and myra- cle made them euer the marker, but bicause they feared least the people would stone them. Here we haue to consider, not onely the priestes and their complypes, but also God and the Apostles.

In the Priestes and Captayne of the Temple, may be perceaued the incurable malice, and peruerse blindenesse of minde in the wicked. For it was sayde before, howe they were in doubt and perplexitie what to doe. Wher vpon maye easily be gathered, that they were stricken with some per-

seuerance

seruaunce of the thing that was done. But yet they go not on therein so farre, to acknowledge the myracle with their hart, and to yelde vnto God. Nay, they retorne to their purpose, and (as the things folowing declare) go about to kyll them, whome they sawe, God a little before, had so marueylously saued. Many examples proue, that thys is the disposition of all wicked. Pharao many times overcome with the maiestie of Gods myracles and grieve of plagues, confesseth the God of Israell, desyeth Moses to make intercession for him, and promyseth he wyll accomplishe the commaundement of God. By and by, he falleth to hys olde vsage, being ready to resist God agayne a freshe. And euen as these men doe here, so did they before in the resurrection of Christ. For when they knewe it by relation of the souldiours, they would neyther beleue the truth, nor feare the inuincible power of Christ, but byrbed the souldiours with money, and spredde false rumours amongst the people of him, as though Christes glorie could haue bene defaced by lying, whome the authoritie of the Emperours maiestie (in whose name the graue stone was sealed) could not keepe within the graue. And would to God, we had onely but olde examples of thys obstinacie, and founde not euery where nowe a dayes, such as neyther by the iudgements of God, nor testimonie of their owne conscience, are content to yelde to Christ and his truth. This is an infallible argument of reprobation, and a worthy punishment of the contempt of Gods word, which once by his Prophete, and afterwarde by Christ he threathned to his enemies, wher e he sayth: yee shall heare in deede, but ye shall not vnderstand, ye shall plainely see, and not perceaue. Harden the hart of this people, stop their eares, and shut their eyes, that they see not with their eyes, heare not with their eares, and vnderstande not with their hartes, and conuert and be healed. These things ought to feare vs, that we contynue not in hatred of the truth, the ende whereof hath so euill successe.

We are further taught, that the wicked can not alwaye doe that they would, but that they many times are byrdeled by the secret power of God. For hereof commeth it to passe, that the Captaine and his souldiours holde their handes, fear ing least the people woulde stone them. So he that thinketh he maye contemne God without controlment, feareth the common people. This is alwayes the propertie of the wicked, that their iudgements and the godlyes be diuers. For the saying of the godly and faithfull person is this: The Lorde is my light and my saluation, whome then shall I feare? The Lorde is the strength of my lyfe, of whome then shall I be afrayde? The Lorde is on my side, I will not feare what man doth vnto me. The voyces of the wicked be these: The Lorde shall not see, neyther shall the God of Iacob regarde it. But these which haue cast from them the feare of God, are compelled to feare mortall men, and manye times their seruauntes, yea their owne children: and they which will not be ledde with the courageous feare of God, are bered with the cowardly and nauishe feare of most miserable men. So God reuengeth his contempt. And this preposterous feare, is a worthy punishment for tyranny, set bp agaynst righteousnesse and truth. Which thing Magistrates desyng to continue in office with commendation, ought diligently to beware of.

But some man may marueyle, why God would suffer his Apostles to be apprehended and brought before them agayne, whome a little before he de-

lyuered

Esay. 6.
Math. 13.

The wicked
can not doe
what they list.

Psal. 27. 18.

Psal. 94.

The faithfull
triumph vnder
the ban.

ner of the
Crosse.

1. Peter. 2.

The modesty
of the A-
postles.

1. Sam. 24.
26.

Among his
Orations in
the. v. booke of
his Epistles,
after 8. xxij.
Epistle.

lyuered by the ministerie of an Aungell, was he no more able to defende them: Or passed he no more on them, who so diligently obeyed his commaundement: Not so. For their great constancy declared God had a singuler care of them. But God would hereby teach vs, that the Godly must triumph vnder the baner of the crosse. For where Christ hanging on the crosse, overcame the world, with the Prince therof, and also synne, death and hell: it were brutish, that we should desyre an easier way of victorie, but we must folow his steps, as Peter teacheth. This is a good remedy against the slouthfulnesse and securitie of the fleshe, alwayes to be readie to beare the crosse.

And the Apostles shewe vs a singuler example of christian modestie, who being taken and caried awaye in the vocation of God, neyther murmured impatiently against God, nor moue the people to sedition against the magistrate. For they knewe God would order all things wisely, iustly, and to their behoufe and commoditie. They knew that Christes kingdome was not of thys world, nor to be defended with worldly weapons. They knew that God would assist them, if his glorie and theyr saluation so requyred. Therefore they commit themselves to his care and tuition, and wayte patiently for his helpe. All they are reprovued by this example, which mutter against God, and dare ouer boldly reprehende his iudgementes. And as many also, as seeke to mainteyne themselves by vnlawfull sedition, as though it made any thing to the setting forth of Christes kingdome. We knowe in dede, that Tyrannes are sometimes punished by sedition, and that by Gods iust iudgement, it cometh to passe, that they be a pray for the seditious, bicause they are not contented to vse a moderate and iust kinde of rule towardes the godly. But we neuer read, that the godly were authours of sedition, from which it appeareth Dauid so abhorred, that he would not kill Saule his open enimie, bicause he woulde commit no heynous offence against the annoynted of the Lorde. I speake of priuate men. For the Magistrates office is an other thing, which if they be christians, must vse the sworde committed to them of God, chiefly for the defence of the godly and glozy of Christ. And what Bishops and Ministers of the Church haue in such a case to doe, we are taught by the example of Ambrose, who when the Emperour commaunded him, to deliuer the Churches to the Arrians, and that therebpon, ensued not onely the disturbance of the congregation, but also an vprore of the whole Citie, he would neyther forsake the congregation being in perill, ne yet moue or procure fight agaynst the Emperour. His wordes vnto the people amongst many others, were these: yee were afraid, least I would forsake the Church, & leaue you, for feare of mine owne safegarde. But you may remember (he speaketh of the aunswere he made to the kings officers) what I haue sayde: that I can not forsake the congregation, bycause I more feare the Lorde of the worlde, than the Emperour of this worlde. Surely if any force should carrie me from the Church, my fleshe might be put out of possession, but not my minde: that I am readye to doe as the Priest vseth to doe, if he purpose to doe as the Prince ought to doe. Why therefore are you troubled? willingly I will neuer forsake you: enforced, I knowe not how to resist. I may sorrowe, I may weepe, I may mourne: Against battayle, Souldiours, and the Gotthes, my weapons be reares, for such is the armour of a priest. Otherwise I ought not, nor may not resist: and to flye, and forsake the Church, I vse not. &c. And when he was bydden by the

the officers of the Gothes, to appease the people, he answered: In my power it is not to incense or mooue them, but it is in the hande of God, to appease them. I though good here in thys place to note these things, that ministers may learne constancie, ioyned with true and christian prudence, by these things. In the meane season, it is euery mans dutie, constantly to abyde in hys vocation, patiently to suffer perils, faythfully to wayte for the helpe of God, and then Christ will not fayle vs, which hath promysed to be the defender of those that be his. To him be prayse, honoz, glorie, and power for euer. Amen.

In his. xxxiii
Epple.

The. xxxvij. Homelie.

AND when they had brought them, they set them before the Counsaile. And the chiefe Priest asked them saying: Did not we straightly commaunde you, that you shoulde not teache in this name? And beholde you haue filled Ierusalem with your doctrine, and intende to bring this mannes bloude vpon vs. Peter and the other Apostles answered and sayde: we ought more to obeye God than man. The God of our fathers rayfed vp Iesus whome you slewe and hanged on tree. Him hath God lift vp wyth hys right hande, to be a Ruler and a Sauour, for to giue repentaunce to Israel, and forgiuenesse of sinnes. And we are recordes of these things which we saye, and so is also the holy ghost whom God hath giuen to them that obeye him.



Although God had deliuered his Apostles out of prison, by the ministry of an Angel, yet he suffreth them to be apprehended and brought agayne before a Counsell of their moste cruell enemies. For hereby he woulde teache vs, that he is able not only to deliuer vs from daungers towarde, but also to saue and preserue vs being in daunger. This doctrine teacheth vs, that we must not despair of our safetie and Gods helpe, whensoever he suffreth vs to be tempted with daungers and aduersities, and taketh not from vs that cuppe, which he once beganne to vs of, that we should drinke it vp after him. For he is out of daunger and safe, which dwelleth vnder the defence of the most high, and vnder the shadowe of the almightie, although a thousande fall beside him, and tenne thousande on his right hande. Luke in this present hystorie giueth vs an euident example hereof, where he declareth what they did with the Apostles in the Counsell: wherein we shall heare, they were whipped, and so escaped the handes of their enemies. Yet before the Euangelist commeth thereto, first he describeth howe the Priestes accused the Apostles, and howe they answered and defended themselves. Hereof at this present we purpose to saye so much as the Lord shall giue vs grace and leysure for.

The Apostles are accused by the high Priest, who also is the chiefe Judge in this controuersie. Neyther doth he so accuse them, as though it were a matter doubtfull, wherein they had offended, but his intent is with great exaggaration of wordes to fraye them, and almost to ouerwhelme them, as persons convicted of heynous offences. For he sayth: Did not we

straightly

Psal. 91.

1. The hiehe
Priestes ac-
cusation a-
gainst the
Apostles.

1. Disobedience.

Deut. 17.

Nu. 16. &c.

Iohn. 1. 2. 18

Math. 21.

2. False doctrine.

Deut. 13.

3. Sedition.

The pride of Antichristian Bishops.

straightly commaunde you, that you shoulde not teach in this name: And beholde you haue filled Ierusalem with your doctrine, and intende to bring this mannes bloude vpon vs. By which wordes, if they be well marked, we shall perceiue, the Apostles are accused not of one, but of diuers most weightie offences. For first, they accuse them of contumacie and disobedience, because they continued preaching, agaynst the manifest Edict and decre of the sacred Counsell. And this was no small offence, because the authoritie of the high Priest was of great account euen by Gods appoyntment, and it was death to resist him. Furthermore, they might be called transgressors and breakers of Goddes constitution, in that neyther being called nor anoynted, they tooke vpon them so boldely the Priestes authoritie, and to teache as we reade Corah with those of his conspiracie did. And that the Bishops had a speciall care, that none shoulde thrust themselves into the rounne of teachers, except they had taken their orders of them, after the accustomed maner, appeareth by this, that they oftentimes demaunded of Iohn the Baptist, and of Christ, who gaue them authoritie to teach as they did. But the seconde crime is more grieuous, where they saye they had filled all Ierusalem with their doctrine. For this is as if a man would saye. It is an heinous offence that you haue thus continued teaching against the Counsels decre. But in that you haue spreade abroad yours, that is to say, a new and false doctrine, this is by no meanes to be suffered: forasmuch as God in the beginning appoynted them to dye, that were authours of anye false doctrine. To these they adde yet a third offence, more heynous & grieuous than the rest, where they saye: you meane to bring this mannes bloude on vs. For by these wordes, they charge them with sedition, as though therefore they preached to the people that Iesus Christ was vniustly put to death, because they would incense and moue the mindes of the people agaynst them, as open tyrautes. But it is a marueylous matter that they nowe so much abhorre to be charged with Christes death, seeing before Pylate they tooke vpon them with solemne protestation, all the fault thereof. For when they perceiued Pylate somewhat slacke to pronounce sentence of death agaynst him, because it stode not with his conscience, they cryed: His bloude be vpon vs, and vpon our children. And nowe as though they had forgotten all this, they thinke they are much wronged to be counted the authours of such an offence. This is the perpetuall guyle of the bngodly, that although they glozy in their wickednesse, (as the holye Psalmist sayth) and seeke prayse of their mischieuous actes, yet will they not haue them reprobued and accused by the worde of God.

But chiefly we haue here to consider the tyrannie and insolencie of false and wicked Bishops, which when they haue gotten the supremacie in the Church, vnder the colour of Gods ordinance, dare exact and require what pleaseth them, and will haue men obey their commaundementes without further adoe. Hereof came it to passe, that they thought the Apostles had so grieuously offended, because they continued teaching contrary to their commaundement. And would to God this tyranny had reigned but in the daies passed only, and did not in these days also beare to great a swinge. For since the Bishops of Rome haue perswaded the people, that they be the lawfull successors of the Apostles, and that it is sayd vnto them: he that heareth me, heareth you, I will giue you the keyes of the kingdom: of heauen. &c. We see

howe

they are gone so farre, that they haue not onely chaunged lawes and times (as Daniel prophesied long sithence Chap. vii.) but also they saye they are not to be reprehended, though they shoulde by heapes tumble mennes soules into hell. See the. xl. Distinction Chapter. If the Pope. O shamelesnesse, O blindnesse. And yet euen in these dayes when they see their uigling and craft disclosed by the light of the Gospell, they dare require obedience of vs, and strue most egarly for them, where they ought with all diligence to defende both their owne libertie, and theirs which are committed to their charge, of which libertie Christ is the authoz.

Let vs also here marke what crimes the Ministers are commonly charged with. For the worlde holdes his owne, and strueth against the truth at this daye euen with the same weapons, and sleighes that it vsed at the beginning. Disobedience and contumacie was alwayes layde to the charge of Gods Ministers, and that they woulde be Lordes and Rulers, and obeye neyther Princes proclamations nor Counsels decrees. They were also called deceyuers and beginners of sedition, as men delighting in tumultes and bypoces. There are many examples hereof in Moses and the Prophetes. Achab calleth Elias the disturber and troubler of the people of Israel, and sayth he is his enimie. He sayth also he hateth Micheas, because he prophesieth nothing but aduersities and troubles towarde him. Amos is accused to Ieroboam, for that the Citie and whole Countrey coulde not awaye with his sermons. They laye to Ieremies charge, that he feareth the mindes of the souldiers with his sermons, whose strength serued for the defence of the Countrey, and they openly saye he was the cause of all the aduersitie & trouble that they suffred. What things the enimies of Christ layde to his charge, are more manifest than neede greatly to be rehearsed. It is no marueyle therefore, if the Apostles be charged with the lyke, and as many as in these dayes followe their steppes. Let no man therefore to rashly beleeue those which lay such faults to the Ministers charge, but let him search the truth, that he be not deceiued through to rash iudgement. In the meane season, let vs acknowledge the naughtynesse of the worlde, and the ingratitude of the people, who being blinded, take them for their enimies, by whose ministerie the benefite of saluation is offred them. But let vs heare the Apostles aunswere, very Apostolike, and venerable, by reason of the grauitie thereof, which may be deuided into thre partes. First they put awaye the crime of disobedience. Secondly, they aunswere the other two obiections briezely. And last of all, they declare the whole matter of Christs kingdome, if happily they might winne any of them vnto the same.

The fault of disobedience they excuse briezely, not denying they were forbidden to preache, but replying that they ought to obey God more than men. Which sentence they befoze also so propounded, that they made the Priestes themselves Judges thereof, because all men endued with common reason and vnderstanding, might easly perceyue the authoritie and truth thereof. But forasmuch as they perceyue the Priestes growne to such impudencie, that they sticke not to preferre their owne authoritie befoze Gods, they boldlye and plainely repeate the same agayne. In these wordes we may learne the true trade of obedience. For they deny not that men must be obeyed, to whome God hath giuen rule ouer vs, such as be our parentes, teachers, Officers, maisters, and Lords, but that we must

What crimes are wont to be layde to the ministers.

1. Reg. 18. 21.

1. Reg. 22.

Amoz. 7.

Ierc. 38. 44.

2. The answers of the Apostles.

The true trade of obedience.

1. Peter. 2.

The doctrine
of the Apostles
is not
newe.

1. Peter. 2.

The Apostles
be not
ditionary.

obey God more than them. They therefore appoynt certaine boundes and limittes of obedience, within the compasse whereof they must walke, which shall prescribe others what to doe. For parentes haue left them their authoritie ouer their children. Magistrates haue their power reserued by doctrine of the Gospell, ouer their subiectes. And that authoritie which God hath giuen to the Ministers of his worde, must not be broken or violated. And Peter in another place commaundeth seruants to obey their maisters, though they be vnreasonable and waywarde. The lyke reason is also of persons married, and of all others whome God hath made superiours ouer other. But if they beginne to abuse their power and dignitie, and will take vpon them to commaunde things contrary to the lawes of God, and to the dutie that we owe him, we must then run vnto the rule of Peter, & not suffer the authoritie of man, and counterfayte shewe of Gods institution, to preiudice or derogate any thing from Gods commaundement. For as soone as they beginne to passe their boundes, and to resist God, they are but mere men, and not to be accounted as the ministers of God. But bicause we haue spoken hereof before, let these fewe wordes suffice for this time.

Secondly, they aunswere the other two crimes in one, saying: The God of our fathers hath rayfed vp agayne Iesus, whome yee slewe and hanged on tree. In fewe wordes they dispatch two things. The first is, the God of our fathers hath rayfed vp Iesus: that is to saye: we preache that Iesus and sauour, which we haue not imagined of our owne heade, but which the God of our fathers once promised, yea, whome he from euerlasting ordeyned to be the sauour of the world. Therefore no man ought to accuse our doctrine, eyther as newe or false. And I see none other cause why they make mention of the fathers, but for that they woulde put them in minde of the promises reuealed to the fathers concerning Christ. Where by the waye, may be perceyued the antiquitie and infallible certaintie of the Christian fayth and religion. And we maye vse the same argument in these dayes, against them which accuse our doctrine of newnesse and falschode. For why is it called newe, which preacheth Christ that was promised from the beginning of the world? Why is it called false, which sheweth vs saluation in him that is the way, the light and the truth? The seconde is, where he speaketh of Iesus, saying: whom yee slewe and hanged on tree. As though he should say: we go not about to bring vpon you y^e blode of Christ, nor to charge you with his death. For you your selues were the authours & principalles of that heynous drede: you condemned him by your consents, & delyuered him to Pylate, you required him to be put to death when Pylate iudged him to be let loose. It was you that sayd: His blode be vpon vs, & vpon our children. These things al men know, bicause they were openly done. And though we would holde our peace, yet the thing it selfe cryeth out, and will not be kept hid. &c. We learne by the Apostles example with what constancie and libertie, we must cope with the professed enemies of the truth. It behoueth vs boldly to defend the quarrel of y^e truth. We must also freely reprove their wickednes, that they thinke not men be afraid of them. For such is the nature of wicked Bishops, that y^e more they be feared, the more fierce they ware, bicause they think their craft is not yet espied. But if a man withstand them to their face, then their combe is cut. Hence springeth y^e constancie of the prophets, whereby they withstoode most mightie princes. For this cause Christ, which was the

the myldest of all other men, seemeth to thunder, when he hath to doe with the Scribes & Phariseis, whom he knew to be altogether incurable. Therefore their modestie is preposterous that now a dayes flatter Popes, & Bishops, who in deepe are greater enemies of the truth, & worse than the Jewes & Priests. Howbeit, least they might seeme to neglect them, which perhaps might be woonne, they briefly set forth the whole hystory of Christ, and of our saluation, and confirme the same with most sure testimonies which is the thirde part of this Apologie or defence. For they say: Him hath God lift vp with his right hand, to be a ruler and a Sauour, for to giue repentance vnto Israel, and forgiuenesse of sinnes. And we be witnesses or recordes hereof. &c. In these wordes both Christ himselfe, and the maner and meane whereby he giueth vs saluation, is described. And they saye Christ is not onely a sauour, but the Prince of saluation, exalted by the right hande and power of God. In the Scriptures, mention is oftentimes made, howe Christ is a King and Prince, chiefly in the Psalmes, and sermons of the Prophets. For herevnto belong the things reade in the Psalmes. ij. xlv. lxxxix. cx. &c. Mich. 5. And the Angell Gabriel seemeth to haue alluded herevnto, where he sayth: he shall sit in the chaire of Dauid his father, and of his kingdome shall be none end. Thus the holy ghost teacheth vs that Christ is not only the minister of our saluation, but is the author which by his owne power hath deliuered vs from the tyrannie of the deuill: also that he is so mightie a sauour, that no man is able to resist him. Neither did he by force take vnto him that honor, but when he had most lowly humbled himselfe, that name was giuen vnto him, that is aboue all names, in the which euery knee shoulde bowe. &c. This serueth for our comfort in temptations. For where Christ is a mightie king, whome the right hande of God hath exalted, and to whome all power is giuen in heauen and in earth, it shall be an easie matter for him to defende vs, neyther shall any man take his sheepe out of his hande. And as the impious rage of the Priests, coulde not let God from exalting him with his right hande: no more shall the wicked enterprises of Princes and the worlde in these dayes any maner of wayes hinder or empayze his kingdome and glozy.

They shewe also the waye and meane howe Christ giueth saluation, which all men must needes imbrace, that are desyrous of their saluation. This way or meane consisteth in two pointes, to say, repentance and forgiuenesse of sinnes, of both which it is written, Christ is the onely author. That repentance is a conuersion and turning of the whole man vnto God, hath manye times already bene declared. This conuersion vnto God, is necessarie for all men, bicause we all through sinne haue gone astray, and daylie swarue from the waye of saluation. But that this is no worke of mans power, or strength, we are taught not onely by the scriptures, but also by daylie experience, and no man can be conuerted, except he be conuerted of God. See Ieremie. 31. Lamentations. 5. This conuersion Christ onely, worketh truely in vs, while he makes vs newe men by the seede of his worde, and by the spirite of regeneration, illuminating vs with the knowledg of God, and enduing vs with a new and holy will, and giuing vs strength to doe that, which of our owne power, we should neuer be able to doe. They are here confuted, which hearing repentance required, by and by, thinke the merite of their owne righteousnesse, is confirmed

Luc. 1.

Phil. 2.

Math. 28.
Iohn. 10.The waye of
saluation.

Math. 18.
Luke. 7.

2. Cor. 5.

Luc. 24.

The Apo-
stles and holy
ghost be wit-
nesses of the
Gospell.

Iohn. 15.
Actes. 1.

and extoll the power of free will. But what glorie we in our owne wyll, if Christ be the author of this conuersion in vs? And what I praye you shall we merite by our repentaunce, which are not able to repent, except Christ by his spirite stirre vs vp, and leade vs thereto. But although a man be conuerted vnto God, yet herein is not our saluation perfite and full. For where we be sinners, we haue neede also of forgiveness and satisfaction, that nothing want to satisfie Gods iustice. But where we sayde euen now, that we coulde not conuert vnto God, vntlesse we were regenerated by Christ, much lesse can we satisfy for our sinnes. And Christ teacheth vs, that our sinnes be such a debt as we are not able to pay. Wherefore, as in the first part, Christ succoureth our infirmitie: so in this also he helpeth vs. For by the merite of his death, he both purgeth the debt of our sinne, and maketh vs iust in the sight of God, whyle he bestoweth on vs that belæue in him, his iustice. For therfore he became sinne for vs, that we by his meanes should be that righteousness, which before God is allowed. And bicause both these things without the which no man can be saued, come by the benefite of Christ onely, we most strongly gather hereof, that without Christ, we haue no saluation, which is the cause that he comprehending the summe of the gospell in fewe wordes, teacheth, that repentaunce and forgiveness of sinnes, must be preached in his name. In the meane whyle, we learne also, how much they erre, which vnder a pretence of Christ, seeke to lyue lycentiously, or thinke he is any cause or occasion of dissolute conuersation, where as he is the verie onely author of true and healthfull repentaunce.

Furthermore, they confirme their preaching of Christ, by testimonies, where they say. And we be witnesses of these wordes, and also the holy ghost, whom God hath giuen to them that obey him. And let no man thinke it rashlye and insolently done of the Apostles, to alleage their owne testimonie, before them, of whome they were accused. For, where Christ appointed them witnesses of his doings, they might not refuse to doe their dutie in this behalfe. And hereby their doctrine was greatly authorized, which no man by any meanes ought to denie, except he will accuse Christ of falsehood. But bicause the Apostles were not ignoraunt, that their testimonie should be of little weight, before the Priestes, they adde an other testimonie also, to witte, the testimonie of the holy ghost, which holy ghost God giueth vnto them, which be obedient vnto Christ. And although all the belæuing feele his testimonie within their mindes, and by the same be ascertayned of their saluation: yet chiefly these wordes be to be vnderstanded, of the gistes and operation of the holy spirite, whereby he bare wytnesse in the primitive Church, to the doctrine of the gospell. For by the power of the holy ghost, it came to passe, that the faythfull spake with newe tongues, that they sodainely became newe men, and that they wrought myracles, which things as we neede not in these dayes, for as much as the Apostles doctrine is sufficiently proued: so, testimonie of the holy ghost ought to suffice vs, whereby we feele our minds confirmed, and through whose encouragement we crye Abba, father. But this is not negligently to be passed ouer, where he sayth: the holy ghost is giuen vnto them that obey Christ. And yet it must needes be that they were endued before this with the holpe ghost, bycause without hym, they neyther could belæue, nor obey. But in them

them the gift es of the spirite were augmented and increased, as Chryst sayth: To euery one that hath shall be gyuen: Whereof we gather agayne, that they cannot haue the holpe ghost which striue agaynst Chryst. For he confesseth, that the holy ghost is such a thing, as the worlde can not receaue. Hereby it appeareth, why the operations and giftes of the holy ghost, be so rare and seldome in these dayes: for thys cause verily: bicause there be so fewe, that endenour to obey Chryst. It becommeth vs by these examles to be stirred bp, to the holy obedyence of sayth, that being indued with the holy spirite, we may go forwarde in all goodnesse, and attayne to saluation in Iesus Chryst: to whome be honour, prayse, power, and glozy, for euer. Amen.

Math. 25.

Iohn. 14.

The. xxxviij. Homelie.

WHEN they heard that, they claue a sunder, and sought meanes to slay them. Then stode there vp one in the counsell, a Pharisey named Gamaliel, a Doctour of lawe, had in reputation among all the people, and commaunded the Apostles to go a side a little space, & sayde vnto them. Ye men of Israel, take heede to your selues, what ye intende to doe, for before these dayes rose vp one Theudas boasting himselfe, to whom resorted a number of men, about a foure hundred, which was slayne. And they all which beleued him were scattered abroad. After this man, was there one Iudas of Galyley, in the dayes of the tribute, and drew away much people after him. He also perished, and all (euen as manye as harkened to him) were scattered abroad. And nowe I say vnto you, refrayne your selues from these men, and let them alone. For if this counsell, or this woorke be of men, it will come to naught. But and if it be of God, ye can not destroy it, least happily ye be found to striue against God.



The Euangelist Luke yester daye declared vnto vs, what crimes the highe Priest objected to the Apostles, and howe the Apostles answered them. Which hystory serueth chiefly to this purpose, that we myght vnderstande with what crimes, the wycked are wonte to defame the truth, and the Ministers thereof, and also what constancie and boldenesse, it becometh vs to vse in the defence of the same. Where the first

and chiefe care must be for the dutie, that we owe vnto God, that for any mans fauour or pleasure we offende not against the same. Then we must take heede, that through our fearefulnesse, our enimies ware not the more insolent, as it appeareth their propertie is. Furthermore, we must constantly holde fast and keepe the confession of Chryst, that we be not ashamed of him be fore men, who was not ashamed to become man and suffer death for our sake. Nowe it foloweth, what effect this answer of Apologie had, with the wicked enimies of Chryst: which is a verie notable place, bicause it reproveth both the incurable obstinacie of the wicked, and also teacheth vs, howe easilie God beateth downe theyr bloody enterprises.

First, speaking of those which had conceaued an implacable hatred against the truth, he sayth: when they heard that, they claue a sunder, and were

1. Death devised against the Apostles.

as men ready to burst for anger. For it spited the proude and ambitious men, to see their authoritie so little regarded, and it seemed a thing to them intolerable, to here the truth of Christ, so boldly and stoutely defended. Therefore in the verie presence of the Apostles, they consult, howe to put them to death. And it is verie lyke they rather vsed furious exclamations, than any graue deliberation. This example teacheth vs, that the wicked and reprobate, which are hardned in the hatred of Christ, can no maner of waye be mytygated and mollified. For such can not receiue the holy ghost, who onely hath power to alter and chaunge the hartes, as we sayde in the last sermon. For although the outwarde worde of God pierce their mindes and touch their consciences, yet it hardeneth them, and maketh them the more fierce. And as great heate in the upper region of the ayre, dissolueth not a colder matter, drabone by thyther, but maketh it congeale into yse: Euen so the mindes of the wicked, the more they are byged with the worde of God, the more fierce they wax, and hard hearted. Or else, as the heate of the sunne melteth the wax, but hardneth myre and claye: so the worde of God, wherewith the mindes of the vngodly are wonte to be taught and enfourmed, maketh the vngodly more subtozne and frowarde. Not that the fault is in the worde of God, but bicause the corruption of nature in the wicked is such, that it letteth & stoppeth the true effect of the word. Examples herof we haue in Caine and Pharaon, in Saul, and Achab, in Iudas the traitor, and infinite others, wherunto these men may also be adioyned, as the matter well declareth. Here let vs learne what to iudge of the men in our dayes, which manifestly vtter their rankred hatred, against the worde, where we are further taught, what an heynous offence it is to persecute the truth, especially if it procede not of ignoraunce, and of a foolish zeale toward God, but of the instigation of most corrupt affections. This thing deserueth, that we are made unfitte, for the medicine of Gods worde, which onely is able to restore vs to health and lyfe.

The ende of
Christes e-
nemies at-
temptes.

Furthermore, this example teacheth vs, what the wicked enemies of the truth, meaning and purpose is in their counsels: surely none other, but that the ministers of truth maye be made out of the waye, who alone they suppose hinder their desyres & wythes. For this they all peculiarly thinke, that there is nothing more against them than the worde of God, which reprooueth their wickednesse, whereby it commeth to passe, that they are not ashamed to shewe all their power against a fewe of simple men, and to stryue with all their might and mayne against them, whome valiaunt men, and of haultie courage, would scarce vouchsafe to take any labour or paine about. But these men be of an other opinion, for they haue perswaded themselves, that then they are safe, when they be no more troubled with the painefull sermons of Gods worde. So Achab thought Elias onely was his enemy, and the disturber of the people of Israell, and promised himselfe certayne victorie against the Assyrians, till he tooke Micheas to counsell, who as he was perswaded, delighted in nothing, but in telling of vnlucky tydings. Euen so these men beleue they should then be free from the gylte of Christes bloude and in safegarde and sure, if the Apostles might be dispatched out of the waye, that they could ring no more in their eares. And euen now a dayes, if a man happen to demaunde of some men, what it is that most griueth them, they onely complayne of the Ministers of Gods

Gods worde. And hereof cometh it to passe, that this worlde so rageth against the preachers of the truth, that it beleueth they onely are the disturbers of all publike peace and tranquillitie, which thing since it hath in all ages bene done, let vs not marueyle at the vsage of our dayes, nor be offended at the attempts of the wicked, of whome Christ hath so often giuen vs warning. Let vs rather arme our selues with the spirite of constancie, fortitude, and patience, let vs also walke warily and circumspectly in the vocation wherevnto the Lorde hath appointed vs, as Christ long agoe hath taught vs.

Mat. 10, &c.

2. Gamaliel
deliuereth the
Apostles
from death.

But some man may marueyle by whose helpe and intercession the Apostles were deliuered out of the handes of their most cruell enimies, and from the perill of present death. Luke sheweth there stode vp a patrone and defender of them, one of their owne bench and number, that is to saye, Gamaliel, whose profession he diligently describeth. For he sayeth he was a Pharisey, which sect as it ascribed to it selfe a countenance of outward iustice: so was it most aduersary to the Christian faith and doctrine. Further, he was a doctoz of the lawe, wherevnto it appeareth he gaue moze studie than the residue of his profession, & his studie wanted not a profitable successe. Beside this, he was of great authoritie, which made all the people to loue him and reuerence him. And that was a thing in this matter verie commodious and auailable. For where the residue of them feared the people, his authoritie they coulde not reiect, vpon whome they knewe all the Commons depended. He therefore being moued with the importunate deuises of his fellowe Phariseyes, and meaning to withstande their furiousnesse, commaundeth the Apostles for a little whyle to stande aside, that he myght the moze frely intreate of this cause, declaring by this his doing, howe much moze prudent and wyse he was than the residue, which in the presence of the Apostles so betrayed the impotencie and rage of their mindes. Then by and by declareth he his iudgement, whereby he mittigateth their moodes, who iudged the Apostles to be put to death. But before we declare Gamaliel his wordes, we haue to consider howe easie a thing it is for God to deliuer his people from daunger, seeing he can raise vp for them defenders euen from among their enimies; & by the counsell and authoritie of one man, can confounde the enterprises & attempts of a great many. For as euen now was sayd, no kinde of men were moze bent against Christ and his doctrine, than the Phariseyes, who had a good whyle before this, pronounced sentence of excommunication against all those that professed Christ. And yet of this Colledge also was Nicodemus, who before this defended Christes quarell. Now cometh Gamaliel out of the same Colledge, whose meanes it pleaseth the Lorde to vse, for the deliuerie of the Apostles. And this one man without any armour or weapon, only by prudent counsaile dasheth all the deuise of the whole counsaile. There are other examples of lyke sort, which teach vs to take a generall doctrine & consolation hereof. Herevnto apertayneth it that Ruben only, who also hated Ioseph in his hart, yet afterwarde saued him from present death. To this maye we adde also howe the Philistines deliuered Dauid, being inclosed on euerye side wyth Saules souldiozs. What shall we speake of Moyse the Capitaine of the people of Israel, whome the daughter of cruell Pharaos saued from drowning in the riuer Nilus? But it woulde be very long, if we shoulde tarie in all the examples

Iohn. 12.

Iohn. 7.

Gene. 37.

1. Sam. 23.
Exodus. 2.

examples which might be brought. It behoueth vs rather to obserue the vse of them, which is, that we be not feared with the attempts of men, which the Lord can forthwith bring to naught, to whose service we all are bound. Which one thing if men as well in generall as particulerly woulde thinke on, they woulde by no meanes suffer themselves to be pulled from fulfilling their vocation.

3. Gamaliel
his counsell.

Let vs marke Gamaliel his counsaile, full of wisdom in daede, yet such as wherein a man may perceiue diuers things wanting, which declare hee was not yet fully instructed in the truth. Yet it pleased the Lorde to vse his helpe, and it is to be thought that he afterward grewe to more godlynesse. His saying consisteth in thre poyntes. First he vseth a pretie preface, whereby he appeaseth the furious, and exhorteth them to do nothing rashly or vnadvisedly: Take heede to your selues (sayth he) concerning these men, what you intende to doe. As though he shoulde saye: I heare that you determine they shall suffer death. But I feare your deuise is to headie, and therefore to dangerous, I woulde therefore haue some diligent and sober deliberation taken, that in our wrath we commit not that which afterwarde we may repent. This is a most profitable and in all ages, necessary admonition, that in our anger we doe or appoynt nothing. For the auncient writers sayde anger was an euill counsaile, as the which is a very phrenesie for the whyle. And what goodnesse or equitie maye a man hope for, of a madde man: wherefore Iames most truly sayth: The wrath of man worketh not the righteousnesse of God. And would God the authoritie of this sentence were as much in these dayes, as we reade it was among the Ethnikes. It is sayde of Augustus that he thought the companie of Athenodorus the Philosopher very necessary for him, bicause vpon his departure from him, he admonished him that he shoulde decree or appoynt nothing to be done in his anger, before he had first recyted the Alphabet or names of the. xxiij. letters. For the wysseman vnderstode that wrath, by leysure, woulde cole and abate. And as notable is it that another of the Philosophers said to his seruant that had offended him: Thou shouldest be beaten if I were not angry. But now a dayes among Christians, many thinke, that men in their anger may doe what they list, and they go about vnder the cloke of anger, to excuse most heynous offences. And in daede if God had made vs Beares or Lyons, their excuse might take some place. But forasmuch as we be men, who ought to be ruled with the bridle of reason, and word of God, we shall be inexcusable, as many as let our selues be caried and ruled with the lust of our affections. But chiefly men of authoritie and Iudges, must be myndefull hereof, least they being caried awaye with wrath, swarue from equitie and righteousnesse.

Gamaliel his saying also is worthe to be diligently considered: Take heede to your selues. &c. Why the Apostles case was in question, and their lyfe in daunger. But the wise man and diligent obseruer of Gods law, perceiued that Iudges commonly were more in daunger through giuing false iudgement, than they that were accused. For what thing can chaunce vnto them more acceptable than death, that chaunge this mortall lyfe for an immortal: But these Iudges prouoke the wrath of God against them, which sitteth in the midst of them, as is writtten Psal. 82. and will not suffer their boldnesse to go vnreueged, which vnder the pretence of godly iudgement,

exercise

Lacob. i.

Erasmus among the Apothegmes, or wittie sayings of Augustus.

Saint Ambrose vpon occasion of a great slaughter committed by Theodosius commaundment, at Thessalonica, enioyned him from thence forth, that sentence of death or banishment pronounced by him, should not be executed, till after. xxx. dayes following: that if wrath or furie had pronounced any thing vniustlye, reason in the meane whyle might expende, and redresse the same. See Theodor. in the Tripartite ix. booke 30. chapter.

exercise unrighteousnesse. Therefore whosoever beare office, let them thinke this sayd vnto them, and take hede to themselves, that being blinded with affections, they stray not from the tracke of righteousness.

In the seconde part of his Oration, he intermedleth examples, out of the which a little after, he draweth the arguments of his sentence. He first alle dgeth examples very prudently, and so telleth them, that at the first it appeareth not what he will conclude thereof, least eyther they shoulde not harken to his saying, or without expending of it, reiect it. Out of a great many he chooseth two specially, which as they were to all men knowne, so were they able most to moue their minds: the one was of Theudas, the other of Iudas of Galiley. Iosephus also maketh mention of them, but touching the order of the storie, he much dissenteth from Luke, because he writeth Iudas was many yeares before Theudas, whome yet Gamaliel openly testifieth to haue risen long before him. But the authoritie of an holy writer, must be of more credite with vs than Iosephus, who it is euident, was deceived in many other things also, & whose writings might easily be corrupted and peruered. In the histories there is no difficultie, and Gamaliel his purpose is to teach none other thing thereby, but that none hitherto went unpunished, that tooke vpon them the name and office of the Messias, but that they with all their sect perished, which vnder this pretence went about to seeke their owne profite and aduancement, whereof afterwarde he gathereth, that the lyke woulde come to passe by the sect of the Christians, if Christ had bene a fraudulent and deceiptfull worker, and that therefore they ought to abyde the iudgement of God. &c. We haue to obserue in the rehearsal of these examples, what shal become of them which wil not embrace Iesus Christ the true Messias. For such men commonly as afe authors and beginners of such mischief, become a praye for sedicious and wicked persons. For who seeth not here that saying of Christ fulfilled: I came in my fathers name, and ye receyue me not. If another come in his owne name, him you will receyue. Which thing we see cometh to passe also in these dayes. For the nature of the worlde is incurable, delighting and reioycing in seducers and deceyuers, and hating the Ministers of the truth continually. Therefore it cometh to passe by the iust iudgement of God, that they taste of effectuell elusion, and wittingly and willingly runne into destruction.

But let vs returne to Gamaliel, to see how he vseth these examples. For of these he gathereth the foundation of his sentence, whose proposition or conclusion is, abstayne from these men, and let them alone. Which to perswade them, he bringeth his argument in forme of a Dilemma, in this wise. This businesse wherof the Apostles (whome you iudge worthy to die) are ministers and stewards, is eyther of God or of man. But whether soeuer it be, I think it good you absteyne from shedding their bloud. For if it be of man, and is gouerned none other waies than by mans counsaile, it wil fall of it selfe, as the examples of Theudas and Iudas within these few yerres passed abundantly declare. Therefore what madnesse were it to incense and stirre vp the furie of the Commons, to take that out of the waye, which within a shorte space though no man set hande to it, will fall to the ground alone. But if it be of God, and be gouerned and ordered by him, it cannot quayle by anye force or counsaile of man. For what is man, being but dust and ashes, able to preuaile agaynst God? Now, the ende of this counsell must be diligently

Concerning Theudas and Iudas Galileus. See Iosephus booke of the Jewishe antiquities, the. 18. booke 1. chapter. And seconde booke of the Jewes wars, or else Eusebius in the historie of the Church. 1. booke. 3. chapter.

Iohn. 5.

2. Thess. 2.

A Dilemmas is a kinde of argument consisting of two propositions or partes, eyther of which whosoever graunteth, shall be caught in a trip.

observed, the which whyle manye neglect, they take occasion hereby of a most pernicious opinion, whereby (say they) no attemptes be they neuer so wicked, no errors be they neuer so blasphemous, are by force to be kept vnder. Whereof can followe none other thing, but the ouerthrowe of all discipline, aswell ciuill as Ecclesiasticall. For the Magistrate shall carie his sword in bayne. And in bayne doth Paule appoynt such Ministers in the Church, as shall not onely teache the truth, but also be able to confute and conuince the gaynesayers. Who will thinke that this so wyse a man ment to lose all the sinewes of Ciuill and Ecclesiasticall gouernement at once? It appeareth rather he had this meaning, to saue the Apostles from the furie of the Judges, and from present death, which he sawe he shoulde most commodiously doe, if he shewed them, that they could not without manifest daunger conclude any extremitie agaynst them. For eyther they must fall in daunger to Godwarde, if the Apostles doctrine were true, and they the ministers of God, or else of the commons, whose rage they were better to auoyde, than to prouoke, specialllye in such a matter as coulde not long stande, if it were but mennes working. Furthermore, whether he vnderstoode the truth or not, he yet seemeth ambiguous and doubtfull in his talke. Therefore their case is of a farre other sort, which being illuminated with the true knowledge of the truth, ought by office to defende it, and to rote out errors and wickednesse.

The counsels
or purposes
of God can
not be letted.
Esay. 40.
Psal. 33.

Psal. 2.

Psal. 110.

1. Cor. 3.
Math. 16.

In the meane season this ought to be to vs as an Oracle, that we learne Gods counsels can be hindered by no force of men, but that mans counsell falleth of it selfe. For God is eternall and immutable, so is his worde eternall, and can by no meanes be infringed. And Dauid testifieth that God scattereth the counsellers of the Nations, but establissheth his owne counsaile for euer. We haue examples euerie where to proue the same. Saul long stryued against the counsell of God, who had fully decreed to make Dauid king of Israel. But the more he stryued, the lesse he perceyued, he preuailed, and founde an euill ende of his contending with God. But chiefly this thing is to be applyed to matters of fayth and religion. It is Gods counsell and decre that his sonne whome he begat from euerlasting, should beare rule ouer his holy hill, that is to say, the church. To him it was saide: Sit thou on my right hand, vntill I make thy foes thy footstoole. Satan from the beginning of the world, hath withstanded this deuise and counsell. And in Abel (whome for this cause, we may call the first Martyr of Christ) beganne this persecution, which continued all the yeares following, and yet to this houre endureth. But the kingdome of Christ and the Church endureth also, bicause it is buylt vpon that rocke, agaynst the which the gates of hell are not able to preuaile. And if on the contrary side, a man consider the blage of the Gentiles, and that monstrous Chaos of ydolatrie, which most mightie Monarchies followed, confirmed by space of manye yeares, allowed by the consent, almost of all people and nations, assaulted at no tyme by force of any man: he shall see it is fallen downe of it selfe, and scattered abroade by the spirite and worde of Christ. The lyke reason is of the holy scripture, which the Apostle calleth inspired of God. For if a man consider the prophane wyrters, their Bookes surely were in great estimation, and had no enemies to make them away, yet the most part of them are perished, and scarce are the names of those bookes

extant,

extant, which in tymes past most riche kings sought with great diligence, and bought full dearly, as is reported of Ptolomeus Philadelphus, and such other lyke. But the holy booke of Scripture so many tymes burned, banished, and hated of most mightie princes, are yet forth comming, and being almost translated into al tongues, be in stead of maysters and teachers ouer all the worlde. Let these thinges therefore serue for our instruction and comfort, that we rashely doe nothing against God, nor feare not the threating decrees and ordynaunces of the world and of tyrannes, against the kingdome of Christ. But let vs so acknowledge God for our reuenger and defender, that we may faythfully serue him in buylding bp of his church, according to our vocation, as Coadiutors of Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honoz, glozy and power for euer. Amen.

Irenus in his
v. booke as
gagnt here-
ties. And Eu-
sebius in his
ecclesiasticall
hystorie. v.
booke and
viij. chap.

The. xxxix. Homelie.

AND to him agreed the other: And when they had called the Apostles, they bette them, and commaunded that they should not speake in the name of Iesu, and let them go. And they departed from the counsell, reioycing that they were counted worthy, to suffer rebuke for his name. And daylie in the Temple, and in euerye house they ceased not, to teache and preache Iesus Christ.



Because it is so ordeyned, that all men of a certaine naturall instinct, are desirous of helth & welth, it can not be chosen, but they must be much offended at aduersitie & tribulation, especially such as accustometh to ryle bycause of religion. For it cometh to passe most times, that men iudge of religion, according to the effect and successe therof, and accuse that religion of falsehood, whose professours they see exercised with persecutions and aduersities. Wherefore, it is not so profitable, as necessary, that we be well instructed agaynst all occasions of offences. Which thing is the cause that the holpe ghost would haue Luke so diligently wypte the afflictions of the primitive Church. Wherein chiefly is to be obserued, what hath alwayes bene the state of Christes Church in this worlde, and howe through the present and faythfull ayde of the Lorde, it hath in tymes past bene preserved in greatest tribulations: that we neyther be offended at the calamities of our daies, as vnwonted, nor dispayre of Gods helpe, and preservation of hys Church. Thys present hystory sheweth vs examples of both these things, the conclusion whereof the Euangelist now describeth, and first he telleth what the conured enemies of Christ did, and afterwarde, what the Apostles dyd.

Concerning Christes enemies gathered togyther in the counsell, Luke wypteth thus: They agreed vnto Gamaliel, and when they had called the Apostles, they bette them, and commaunded them, they should not speake in the name of Iesu, and let them go. He sayth, they obeyed Gamaliel his saying, when yet they did two thinges, which he counselled them not to doe. For they bette the Apostles with rodde, and renewed their first decre, where- by they go about to prohibite the preaching of the Gospell. Yet they here-

The Apo-
stles are bea-
ten with rods

Luc. 23.

No manne
must be of-
fended at the
afflictions of
the vngodlye
as straunge.
Iohn. 16.

Math. 16.
Iohn. 15.

They are de-
ceiued that
iudge of reli-
gion and doc-
trine, accor-
ding to the
afflictions.

in obey Gamaliel, that they put not the seruantes of Christ to death, as they had minded to doe, yet could they not refrayne, but beat innocent men with whippes and rodde. Therefore it must nedes be, that they were in a verie great rage, which when matters seemed done and past, was not yet quenched. But this is the verie propertie of the persecutours of Christ, that when they seeme pleased and appeased, yet secretly foster hatred and furie in their mindes, and seldome will let any of Christs ministers passe, without some marke of ignominie, or open punishment, least they might seme bniustly to haue risen against them, and for that they would put those that followe them in feare. So Pylate, although he iudged Christ to be innocent, yet would he not let him go, before he had scourged him. It is yet verie comfortable, that the Lorde so brydeled their rage by the onely persuasion of Gamaliel, that they durst not put the guylelesse to death, whereof we gather, that the wicked can not alwayes doe what they like, but are ruled euen against their willes, with the raynes of Gods prouidence. There are in this example diuers other thinges, the obseruation whereof, is also verie profitable for vs in these dayes.

And first we are taught, that it is no straunge and vntownted thing, though the godly, and holy worshippers of Christ in these dayes, be subiect to the will and pleasure of the vngodly, and suffer afflictions. For Christ hymselfe gaue vs warning hereof long agoe, & tolde vs that a time would come, that whosoever kylled anye of his people, should thinke he dyd Gods seruice. He calleth those that be his to the crosse, and by his owne example teacheth vs, that we should not hope for any better state or condition, than he suffered. The Apostles nowe feele the same, and are not offended thereat, but rather oftentimes admonishe vs, that we be not offended, as at any straunge thing, if at any tyme we be tryed by fyre. See the first of Peter, the fourth Chapter. It shall be profitable for vs diligently to consider and thinke vpon the same. For in so doing it shall come to passe, that we shall neyther vse our selues insolently in prosperity, nor yet be discouraged in aduersitie, bicause we haue foresene them both.

Secondly, it is worthy of consideration, that the Apostles the elect instruments of Christ, in a verie good and holy quarrell (which to defend they take vpon them, according to Christs commaundement) are ignominiously beaten. Whereof we plainly gather, how foule and shamefull an error they are in, which iudge afflictions, to be a token and argument of a naughty and vnrightheous cause: of whose number are they which now a dayes, charge vs as causers of all kinde of miseries and calamities, whereby it appeareth (say they) how we erre in our beliefe and religion. But herby it appeareth howe destitute they be of wyfte and reason, for that they perceaue not those thinges, wherein the verie Ethnike Poets gaue a better iudgement. For it is well knowne what Naso sayth:

I wyshe he may misse of successe,

That of the effect the deede dorth gesse.

For if these mens iudgements preuaile, we shall finde fewe or none of the true worshippers of God, but they deserue likewise to be condemned, bicause a blinde man may see many of them, not onely molested with many persecutions, but also slayne by the handes of most cruell enemies. And that we should hope for no better, Christes worde, where he aduertiseth vs

of

of the state of the latter dayes, abundantly teacheth vs. Wherefore, who-
soeuer iudgeth of religion, according to the falling out and successe of thys
worlde, may be iudged lyke to the Jewes Souldiours, which gaue Christ
hanging on the crosse, Vineger to drinke, and sayd. If he be the king of Isra-
el, let him now come downe from the crosse, and we will beleue him. Hee
trusted in God, let him delyuer him if he will haue him, for he sayde he was the
sonne of God. And surely what more tarte and eger Vineger can there be,
than such bpbaydings, whereby both the glozy of God, and the certaintie
and truth of his worde, is called in question?

Math. 27.

And yet we may not thinke, that God hath no care nor prouidence of
the worlde, when we see the true and holy seruants of God afflicted. For
to say nothing of his secrete iudgements, there are infinite other causes,
wherefore God suffereth these things so to come to passe. For thys wayes
God sometime pulleth downe the secret corruption and haultinesse of our
flesh, which vnlesse it were tamed, would burst forth to the great inconueni-
ence and dammage of his people. And we may not reply and say that God
many times bseth to humble & bring downe those that othertwise are lofty
ynough, and neuer shewed any great signe of fiercenesse or pride. For God
knoweth the naughtinesse of mans inclination, and wherof we haue neede,
better and surelier than we can perceaue. Therfore he chastiseth vs in time,
and some whyle pꝛeuenteth our naughtinesse, before it waxe strong, and
make vs incurable, and to be condemned with the worlde. Furthermoze
he tryeth our fayth by this meanes, not that he is ignoraunt of any thing,
but that both we may be an example to others, and also proue what infir-
mitie as yet remayneth in vs, and howe much we haue neede of the helpe
and grace of God. Beside this, he wyll hereby shewe vnto the worlde, howe
sinne displeaseth him, seeing he so seuerely correcteth the small faultes of his
electes, yea their secret and hidden naughtinesse. And here vnto had Peter
a respect where he sayth: The time is come, that iudgement must begin at the
house of God. If it first beginne at vs, what shall be the ende of them, which
beleue not the gospell of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saued, where
shall the vngodlye and the sinner appeare? Woulde God these people woulde
marke well these things, which of our afflictions in these dayes (the consi-
deration whereof, ought to serue for amendment of their life) take occasion
of great impietie and blasphemie.

The causes
of afflictions.

Thirdly, it is not to be neglected howe Christ delyuereth his Apostles
from perill of death, but yet suffereth them to be beaten with rodde. By
which example he teacheth vs, to shake of carelesnesse from our mindes,
least hauing escaped some one daunger, we suppose all things after to be
safe and in quyet, but we must rather thinke there remayneth for vs other
conflicts, wherevnto we must prepare and make readie our selfe. For the
which cause, God euerie where exhorteth vs to watch and to pray. And we
want not examples, that teach vs, howe unhappie an ende cometh of car-
nall securitie and slouthfulnesse.

We must be-
ware of care-
lesnesse.

But let vs also see the other thing which they did othertwise than Gama-
liel counsailed them. These wicked Bishops, & the other sitting with them,
renewed the decre, whereof mention was made in the chapter before go-
ing, and commaunded the Apostles, that from thenceforth, they shoulde
teache no moze in the name of Iesus, that is, that they should not preache

The decree
which forbad
Christ to be
preached is
renewed.

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the Gospell. This is a great argument of stubboznesse, which is peculiar to the wicked. For where in all other things they are tossed to and fro with diuers affections, and are light and inconstant: yet they remaine most firmly in the hatred of the truth, and most earnestly bge whatsoeuer thinges they thinke make for the ouerthrowe thereof. But let vs diligently marke the tenour and fourme of their decre, whereby they forbid them to speake in the name of Iesus. Thus the name of Iesus Christ is hated of the wicked. The worlde can after a sort, abide the doctrine of penance, and forgiveness of sinnes. For both in tymes passed, the wise men of the Gentiles wrote many thinges touching repentaunce, and purging of sinnes, and in these dayes the Papistes much intreate of both these poyntes and Articles. And where as the thinges they say, come out of the closet of humane reason, they easily admyt and allowe them, bicause they are wonte to be ledde with the reason of the flethe. But as soon as repentaunce and remission of sinnes is preached in the name of Christ, according as he hath commaunded: this doctrine the worlde cannot away with all, bicause it is contrarie to the thinges which mans wisdom hath inuented, in matters of religion, and saluation, wherein men commonly vse greatly to glorie. For if Christ giue vs true repentaunce (as Peter before hath taught vs) and we be not authoꝝ thereof our selfe, then the libertie of our will is fallen, mans power is dashed, and we haue no cause to glorie any moze in our merites. Yea that is founde true that Christ sayth: without me you can doe nothing. Likewise is that saying of Paule true. It is God that worketh in vs both the will and the dedde. Againe: what hast thou that thou hast not receyued? And if thou hast receyued it, why reioycest thou as though thou hadst not receyued it: Againe, if we haue remission of sinnes in the name of Christ, then is the glorie of our satisfactions quayled, and the trust in our owne workes is founde vaine, & ridiculous, yea, an impious, and blasphemous fayre or market of holy thinges, the which couetous men that thinke gayne good religion, haue brought in. Further, where the heynousnesse of sinne is such, that it could no way be taken awaye, but by Christes bloude onely: it easily appeareth, howe earnestly and feruently we ought to labour, that we fall not agayne from that holynesse and libertie, into the which we be brought, by the benefite of Christ. And here are opened the springs of christian discipline, without the which the profession of a christian name, serueth moze to damnation, than to saluation. Yet men of their corrupt nature and disposition, abhorre from all these thinges. Whereby it cometh to passe, that they can not patiently brooke and heare the doctrine of Iesus Christ. It is profitable to consider these thinges, least the ignorant suspect the doctrine of the Gospell, which we see the worlde so enuyeth and hateth.

Let vs passe from the wicked enemies of Christ, to his elect vessels the Apostles, and let vs see howe they here behaued themselves. Of whome Luke telleth specially two thinges. First, that they went from the Counsell, reioyning that they were counted woorthy to suffer rebuke for Christs name sake. The other is, that they ceased not daily, both in the temple, and in euery house to teach and preach Iesus Christ. Of both which we haue the moze diligently to intreate, bicause they serue much to our comfort, and instruction. The Apostles reioyce that they are in reproch beaten with rods.

Let

Iohn. 15.

Phil. 2.

1. Cor. 4.

The Apo-
stles reioyce
in the repro-
ches they
suffer.

Let no man imagine the Stoikes indolency or want of affections in them, or that they were so farre out of their wittes, that they coulde not iudge betwene honoz and shame. For it is both euident they were men, and also subiect to the affections that are in men, and such as had diuers times defended their good name agaynst the slaunders of the wicked.

They reioyce that for Chzistes name sake, they were able to suffer shame. Where we see two weightie causes of ioye concurring together. For first, it is euident all men are sinners, and that euen in the godlye remaine smatches of sinne, whereby they manye times grievously offende, so that they deserue to be punished of God. But such is the goodnesse and clemency of God, that he sendeth such punishmentes vnder the name of Chzist, and for the truth, which ought to be punishmentes for sinne. Which is, as if a Prince should deliuer a thiefe which had deserued hanging, from shamefull death, and woulde sette him in the fore fronte among the chiefe of his Court, to fight for the libertie and safetie of his kingdome. And it is verelyke the Apostles had this consideration, who could not as yet forget what they had committed, partly by their fowle flying awaye, and partly by their fowle deniall when Chzist was taken. And where their mindes hitherto might be in doubt, nowe haue they an infallible argument of Chzistes reconciliation, perceyuing that they are made partakers of his crosse and affliction. Herevnto is to be ioyned another cause proceeding of Chzistes promises, whereby he promisetht the ioyes of the kingdome of heauen, to them which suffer persecution for righteousnesse, & his names sake. For he sayth: Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousnesse sake, for theirs is the kingdome of heauen. Blessed are you when men reuyle and persecute you, and shall falsly say all maner of euill sayings against you for my sake. Reioyce and be glad, for great is your rewarde in heauen. Againe: you are they which haue abidden with me in my temptations, and I appoynte vnto you a kingdome, as my father hath appoynted to me, that you maye eate and drinke at my table in my kingdome. &c. Which promises bicause they sawe fulfilled and confirmed in Chzist, which through the crosse triumphed ouer all the power of hell, and by death entred into the kingdome of heauen, they could not but greatly reioyce, when they perceyued that by these beginnings they hasted to the inheritaunce of the heauenly kingdome. And as these thinges were an occasion to the Apostles, to reioyce, so ought they to cause vs in afflictions to reioyce and be glad. For this is the propertie of all Christians (as Paule sayth) to reioyce and be merie in afflictions. And surely, there are notable causes, which in these dayes ought to stirre vs to the consideration of these thinges, forasmuch as we see these many yeares, the enemies of Chzist swarming in Germanye, who for this cause most cruelly persecute vs, for that we haue chosen rather to obey Chzist, than Antichzist. At whose victozies and successe many are so offended, that they suspect, as it were, the doctrine of truth, and we haue scene many (more is the pitie) as touching the fayth, to haue made shipwacke. But if we would call to remembrance our sinnes, and woulde diligently consider the ingratitude whereby Germanie these many yeares, hath partly neglected the vnspeakable benefite of Gods worde, and Christian libertie, and partly betrayed it, and with vnbzidled licentiousnesse of lyfe, polluted the same: we shoulde see the wonderfull goodnesse of God towarde vs, who woulde haue vs in ieopardie

Luc. 22.

Rom. 5.

fo?

2. Tim. 2.

The persecu-
raunce of the
Apostles in
teaching.

1. Cor. 14.

Psal. 50.

for the truth of his worde, and become witnesses of his sonne, and yet had deserved destruction through our sinnes and wickednesse. And that it might appeare, we stood in daunger, and suffered not for our owne wickednesse, but only for religion and the truthe's sake, he sent in among vs, such enemies, whose living and maners abundantly declare, that they were not so much prouoked with our sinnes agaynst vs, as with our onely confession of the truth. Therefore what more euident argument of Gods goodnesse and grace could be shewed vnto vs, than that he hath giuen vs strength, not onely to beleue in Christ, but also to suffer for his names sake: for hereof we may conclude with Paule: If we die with Christ, we shall liue with him. If we suffer with him, we shall also reigne with him. Bicause manye see not this glory of the crosse, eyther they filthily fall away from the profession of the fayth, or else with vngodly reproches, vpbrayde vs with our fayth, and sleaundersously defame vs, which mourne vnder the crosse of Christ. As many truly, as consider these thinges as they ought, cannot chouse but glory and reioyce in Christ, when they see his markes appeare in their bodies. Therefore greatly is their folly to be bewayled, who are offended at the afflictions and crosse of Christ, whereas they might rather gather argumentes of comfort, and ioye of the same.

Finally, Luke sayeth of the Apostles, that without any regarde had to this wicked decre, they ceased not to teache and preach in the name of Iesus Christ. And this they did openly in the Temple, as long as they could be suffered. But when the tyrannie of their enemies had driuen them out of the Temple, then beganne they to preache in the houses of the faythfull. For Gods truth is not bounde to any certaine place, but may be taught euery where, so that a regarde be had of order and comlynesse, as Paule teacheth. Thus they perswourme in very dede that which they protested in the Counsell, that is, howe God was more to be obeyed than men: and by their example confute them, which now a dayes affirme, that in matters of faith and religion, we must simply obey the magistrates. As though God had made himselfe and his religion subiect to mannes pleasure and appoyntment. But bicause we haue already intreated hereof, once or twyse, there needeth no more to be sayde at this time. In the meane whyle, the constancie of the Apostles is wonderfull, which being scourged and beaten, doe boldly go on in the office that God appointed. The slothfulnesse of men in our dayes, is by this example confuted, who hauing suffered somewhat for the truthe's sake already, thinke they haue now done all their dutie, and will henceforth suffer neyther paines nor daunger any more. In dede their doings might after a sort be borne with, if it were in our owne libertie to appoynt the boundes of our labour. But bicause we be seruants, it becommeth vs to wayte vpon the Lordes will, and to abide his leysure with silence. And Christ sayth they be not meete for his kingdome which loke backward, but such as continue vnto the ende. See Luke the. ix. Mathew the. xxiii. Beside, it is the commaundement of God, that we being deliuered out of daungers and distresse through his benefite, shoulde glorifie him. Which thing they cannot doe that leaue and forsake their standing, and being overcome with feare of perilles, procure their ease and quietnesse. Wherefore, let euery man in his calling followe the constancie of the Apostles, but chiefly such as the Lord hath committed the dispensation and

ordering

ordering of his Church and worde to : and let them not distrust his ayde, who they see so long agoe had such a care of his floche. Whosoener can giue a iust account of their ministerye vnto him, shall be partakers of his kingdome. To him be blessing, honor, glory and power for euer. Amen.

The sixt chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The .xl. Homelie.

IN those dayes when the number of the Disciples beganne to increase, there arose a grutch among the Greekes against the Iewes, because their widowes were despised in the dayly administration. Then the twelue called the multitude of the Disciples together and sayde : It is not meete that we should leaue the worde of God, and serue Tables. Wherefore (brethren) looke you our among you seauen men of honest report, and full of the holy ghost and wisdom, to whome we may commit this businesse. But we will giue our selues continually to prayer, and to the ministration of the worde.



The Euangelist Luke thus farre hath set forth the beginning, proceeding, increase, and order of the primitive Church. In the which we haue seene all things very wisely ordered according to the worde of God, and amongst the horrible persecutions and cruell attemptes of the enunies, with mosste prosperous successe, administred. Nowebeit, because the things there intreated, be somewhat generall, nowe at length the godly writer descendeth to matters more speciall, declaring howe certaine peculiar per-

sons employed their great traueyle to promote and aduaunce Christes kingdome. Among whome, because Steven which was one of the Deacons, of whom no mention hath bene heretofore made, is the first, he beginneth most commodiously his hystorie with the institution of the Deacons, and in this present place teacheth, vppon what occasion the order of Deacons was appoynted, and then sheweth after what order and maner those first Deacons were elected and ordeyned by the Apostles. And in this narration, are many thinges, whereof in these dayes, the Church hath great neede. Wherefore we shall speake of ech thing diligently.

1. The cause
why Deas
cons were oꝝ
depyed.

The multitude of the beleeuers was the occasion and cause of this newe deuised order in the Church, by reason of a quarrell and grutch growne among them. For at this time the Church of Christ grewe, and was marueylously encreased, and the enterprises of the wicked Bishops, which laboured to oppresse the Church, were utterly vaine. Howbeit, because this Church was gathered together of diuers kindes of people, it could not long agree. For there arose a quarrell or grutch among the Graekes, against the Hebrewes. He calleth them Graekes, or Proselytes, eyther because they returned from their Gentilitie to Iudaisme, eyther for that they were borne of parents that were Jewes, and scattered among diuers nations. For it is euident that at this time the Gentiles were not as yet receyued into the fellowship of the Church, forasmuch as long after this, Peter was rebuked for hauing preached the gospel to Cornelius and his familie, men that were not circumcised, as appeareth hereafter in the .xj. Chapter. The cause of this grutch was, for that the Graekes widowes were neglected in the dayly administration, that is to saye, in the distribution of the living delt euery day among the beleeuing. For it hath bene heretofore declared, howe many layde their moneyes together, to be at the disposing of the Apostles, to giue thereof to euery manne, as he shoulde haue neede. In this case it chaunced, that the Apostles eyther being ouercharged with multitude of businesse, ouerhipped some fewe amongst them, or else that they deemed they were despised, which things, these straungers (a suspicious kinde of people) aboue all other, bitterlye complayned of. And this thing was the cause why the accustomed order and maner of administration of this money hitherto, seemed nowe somewhat to be altered. But before we speake hereof, we haue here certaine other things to obserue.

The primitiue Church
not boyde of
fautes.

Gallat.3.
Colloss.3.

1. Cor. 10.

And first is to be considered, howe euen the primitiue Church was not boyde of hir defectes and fautes, which hitherto yet seemed prosperous, and perfite in all poyntes. And they are no light fautes which are here recited, but horrible. For they obserue differences of Nations, where, in Christ there is none at all. (For in him is neyther Iewe nor Gentyll, Scythian, or Barbarous. and being factiouslye deuyded, they nowe beare not malice and grutch secretly in their hart, but vtter the bitterness of their mindes with vniust complayning. We see therefore the primitiue Church infected with that fault, for the which we reade manye thousandes vnder Moyse were sometimes ouerthrowen in the wilderness, by Gods horrible iudgement. To this may be added a detestable ingratitude towards the Apostles, who they knewe were occupied in many other affayres, yea, who were once or twise before cast in prison, and who alone they sawe bare all the brunt and daunger almost of the whole Church. And where it is a great offence to haue a wrong opinion of those that deserue well of vs, and benefite vs, these by their murmuring call the Apostles credit into doubt, and giue occasion of sedition. And this they doe in a time of persecution, when it behoued them all to haue bene most carefull of mutual loue and vniity. By which example we are taught, that there can neuer be appointed so perfite a president of a church, but y alway some thing may happen woorthy to be amended, not that there is eyther such obscuritie in the worde of God, or such incertaintie, that nothing can be perfectly ordered thereby, but because such is the corruption of our witte, that it alwaye seeketh occasion to infringe and breake the moste

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holy ordinaunties of God. Therefore, foolish and molte arrogant is the boldnesse of those men, which thinke they haue attayned to the highest perfection, and will abyde no kinde of admonishment. Furthermore, the rashnesse of them is here reprovued, which forsake those congregations, in whom they find or perceiue any blemishes or imperfections, & are the authors and causes of schisme, wherein the Anabaptists commonly are guiltie. But if these mennes reason shoulde take place, then shall not the primitive Church be iudged free, nor thought worthy, to whome a man may ioyne himselfe. Also where Christ hath chiefly commended to vs the keeping of vnitie, it easily appeareth, with what spirit they are ledde, which thinke it but a trifle to breake the vnitie of the Church.

Further it is to be obserued, that this grutch arose when the number of christians increased, when they ought most to haue acknowledged Gods grace, and to haue imbraced vnitie. But this is all way scene where a multitude is, there is also murmuring and confusion, because it is impossible in such diuersitie and desyes of mindes, to satisfie all mennes wylles. And nature hath so ordeyned, that they which are not pleased and content, seeke alwayes some occasion of piling complaint. That faythfull seruaunt of God Moles, whome the Israelites many tymes went about to stone, when they remembred theyr fleshe pottes in Egypt, founde this to be true. The like now seele the Apostles, who notwithstanding in their administration of these things, bled vndoubtedly all kinde of truth and diligencie. Let no man therefore thinke it straunge or wonderfull, nowe a dayes, though in that multitude of poore and needie, which we euerywhere see, murmurings and complaynings be heard, which as it is in al places bled, so chiefly is it to be scene in Hospitals, and in such places where the poore are found and mainteyned. For though there be no cause else, yet pouertie of it selfe is alwaye whyning and complayning, which faulte for this cause chiefly deserueth pardon, because there chaunceth daylie dyuers occasions, which are able to moue mindes, be they neuer so constant. Let them rather that haue the charge and oversight of the poore, beware that they giue no iust occasion of murmure and complaint, whyles eyther they vniwillingly distribute suche thinges as they haue neede of, or else wickedly conuey away that which is giuen for the finding of the poore. For it is no small or trylling fault that they commit herein. For they contampnat themselves with great sacriledge and lye vnto the holy ghost, and also be occasions to the poore of no small offence in that they giue them causes to be angrie and moued, which otherwise had neede to be comforted. Let it waigh with them howe the primitive Church was troubled with none other encumbrances, than such as sprang eyther of vniust, or negligent administration of ecclesiastical goods. For the scripture teacheth that Iudas stumbled at this block. We see also howe Ananias and Sapphira made wacke of their salvation on this rock. And in this place the Grecians take no other occasion of their seditious murmuring, than for that they thought, their Wydowes were neglected, in the publike distribution of the Church goods. Which examples, the holy ghost would therefore diligently to be witten, to declare what daungers chiefly they ought to shunne and auoyd, which purpose not vnprofitable, to bragge of their christian calling, but in their doings, meane to expresse the same. For it becommeth not them which eyther haue already forsaken their owne

Iohn. 17.

I. Iohn. 2.

Grutch in the multitude.

Iohn. 12.

godes, for the name of Christ, or else ought to forsake them, if necessity so requyre, to bestowe the godes of the poore fraudulently and guylefully. And it is an absurde, and neuer ynough punishable offence, to purloine and imberill away those things, which other men haue giuen to the reliefe of the poore, for the mainteyning of whome, we are commaunded to spend all we haue. But woulde God it were as easie a matter, herein to correct the blage of our dayes, as we may not without great cause bewayle the same.

1. The Apostles speedily consult of the redress.

But what doe the Apostles, after this grutch is risen? Doe they rayle on them whome they heare thus murmur against them, for their vniust distribution? Doe they forsake these vnkinde murmurers, and leaue of in displeasure, all care of administration of the Church? Doe they of their priuate authoritie prescribe anye newe order to the Church? Or (which thing might haue had some shewe of charitie) doe they dissemble and make delapes, as though by delaying and winking at the matter, this mischief might haue bene qualified? Luke maketh no mention at all of anye suche thinges. For they see that mindes already to much incensed, are not to be more prouoked: neyther can they for a fewe of murmurers sakes, leaue of the care of the whole Church, which Christ had committed to them, neyther doe they of their priuate authoritie, as aspyzers to tyranny, prescribe Gods household or inheritance any such thing: neither do they thinke it good, to dissemble or negligently to passe ouer so apparaunt an inconuenience. But in time they prouide a remedie, and calling all the multitude together, they openly and friendly consult of some better order and way to be appointed for the poore. This example or president, is not onely in all ages to be obserued, but also with great diligence to be followed, if we desyre the churches preservation and safetie. For neyther must the pleasure of a fewe be so borne with, that they shall doe whatsoeuer lyketh them, and lyke Lordes prouidely beare rule ouer the church, neyther must open vices be winked at, especially such as giue occasion of murmurings and complaint. For both they gather strength, and craepe further with long tarryaunce, and so inflame the mindes, that that euill which at the beginning might easily haue bene cured or remedied, becommeth incurable. It also cometh to passe, that hereby occasion is gyuen to such as be rashe and seditious, to inuade and vsurpe a rule and dominion ouer the Church, and so at their pleasure to make and appoint newe orders and reformation. This thing ought they to haue considered, which nowe a dayes bragge of their falsse succeding the Apostles, and will be taken for chiefe rulers of the Church, who thinke it intollerable that the godly Magistrates, should appoynt any reformation in their Churches, as the complaintes of the whole worlde these many yeares, could not awake them, to take away, the manifest and horrible abuses, whereof they haue bene to long, both the authozs and defenders. Yea and we also ought to haue considered this thing, which glory in the name of the gospell, and wil seme to haue reformed our Churches. For who is so foolish, that heareth not the poore euery day, for the like cause murmuring and complayning? And woulde God the complaynts of poore were not more iust than theyrs, of whome it is here intreated. For in many places the Magistrates rape and reauie the Church godes, and they are spent and consumed by such as neyther serue the Church, neyther are

ledde

ledde with any desire of Euangelike truth, the poore in the meane whyle, and the ministers of the church also being in extreme beggerie, and ready to sterue for hunger, whome Christ so diligently hath commended to hys church. To say nothing of the neglecting of studies, and wasting of schooles, the contempt of discipline and good maners, and infinite like mischiefes, all which we may thanke this wicked robbing of churches and Colledges of. Many wise men see these things and lament them. Diuers saythfull Pastours of Churches, reprove them and desire amendment. Many openly bewaile it, and there wante not which with seditious murmuring, testifie the indignation of their mindes. But what profite is there in all these wayes? There be men which thinke these murmurers, are to be bypdeled, by threats and proclamations, and by punishments. And they that seeme to be the best, neglect and care nothing at all therfore. So no man thinketh earnestly of any reformation, bicause no man will be put out of possession of the Church goodes. But the Lorde will finde a way one day, and by his horrible iudgement, will awake these sluggardes, whome no admonishment of his diuine worde, nor complaintes of the poore can awake.

But where the matter is of great wayte, that is here intreated, Luke also reciteth the Apostles Oration, wherein they proposed this matter to be discusse of the church. The Oration is deliberatiue, and the state therof is, that Deacons must be ordeyned, to whome the distribution of the common money, and care of helping the poore, may be committed. And the Oration consisteth of thre pointes. The first conteyneth a brieve excuse, wherein they both render a reason of their present doing, and modestlye put away the crime laide against them, by these murmurers: so that they take vpon them all the faulte, least any occasion of suspicion, or bpbayding should remayne. For they say, It is not meete that we should leaue the worde of God, and serue at the table. The argument is deduced of impossibilitie. For they declare, that it can not be, that they can discharge both the offices, that they haue hitherto susteyned, wherefore, it is necessarie that one of them be committed to some other. They also declare that no man ought to take it grieuously, if they haue made any default, considering the manifold affayres, wherein hitherto they had bene occupied. It is as much as if they should say. Bicause the money was taken vnto vs, which certaine godlye disposed had giuen to the churches vse, we gladly tooke vppon vs, the distribution of the same, least we should seme anye waye to neglect the Churches commoditie. But we learne by experience, that we are not able both to satisfie the place of teaching, and also this office of distribution, and we confesse that among so manifolde busineses, something might be ouersene of vs. Wherefore we must lay aside the one or the other of these offices. But we may not intermyt the office of teaching, seing Christ hath commended the same vnto vs, and hath appoynted vs witnesses of the thinges he hath done. Therefore, this other office, must be appointed to some other, that may serue at the table, that is to say, which may see to the thinges, belonging to the helping and succouring of those that be poore.

We are taught in the first part of thys relation, how great the Dignitie of the gospell, and worde of God is, considering the Apostles preferre the preaching hereof, before the ecclesiasticall distribution and helping of the poore, which yet is a most godly thing, & berie necessary. Neyther were they

ignozaunt

Math. 26.

3. The Apostles oration concerning the ordeyning of Deacons.

The dignitie of the gospel.

Galar. 2.

Math. 6.

Luc. 11.

Luc. 10.

1. Cor. 1.

Math. 20.

Luc. 22.

1. Tim. 3.

Ezec. 3. 33.

Math. 24.

What manner
of men must
be chosen to
be Deacons.

ignoraunt that the ministers of the Gospell ought by no meanes to despise the poore, seing afterwarde they so earnestly commended the care of them to Paule and Barnabas. But when the matter came to thys point, that either the ministration of the table, or worde must be intermytted, they thinke it unmete, to neglect the preaching of the worde, vnder the pretence of looking to the poore. Bicause greater respect is to be had of the soule, which is fedde with the worde of God, than of the body and bodily fode, as Christ hymselfe teacheth: Seeke first the kingdome of God. &c. Yea Christ hymselfe preferreth the studie of his worde, before all other duties, which sometimes were done vnto hym. For he answered the woman, that sayde, blessed be the wombe that bare thee, and the pappes that gaue thee suck: yea blessed are they rather which heare the worde of God and keepe it. Wher vnto is to be referred the storie of Martha & Marie, Lazarus sisters, in the same Euangelist.

And Paule thought he ought to haue more regarde of the Gospell, than of the sacraments, where he sayth, he was not sent to baptise, but to preache the gospell. Furthermore the Apostles in thys place plainly teach, that the excellencie and waight of his office is suche, that it requireth a peculiar man, boyde of all other cares and labours. Which was the cause that Christ would not haue his Apostles occupied in the administration of Emphytes and kingdomes of this worlde: Herein our counterfait Bishops in these daies are verie faultie, which will doe any thing rather than preache, and are oftener seene in the Courtes and Campes of princes, than in the Pulpit, where Paule sayth the chiefe propertie in a Bishop is, to be able to teach. But would God they onely herein offended, and that we had not among vs, that eyther through immoderate desyre of ryches, or in vanities, to say, in banquetting, hawking and hunting, and sometime in dishonest exercises, spent not the greatest part of that tyme, that otherwise shoulde be employed to reading and teaching. They shall one daye feele the horrible iudgement of God, when the bloud of those which haue perished through their negligence, shall be required at their handes.

In the seconde part of the Oration, they shewe what is to be done, for the succouring of the afflicted Church, where they saye: Looke out therefore among you seauen men of approued honestie, being full of the holy ghost and wisdom, wome we will appoynt for this businesse. They thinke it good to ordeyne Deacons or Stewardest, to whome this charge myght peculiarly appertaine. And they will haue seauen to be chosen, bicause they suppose that number sufficient for that time, not that they woulde haue all Churches bounde to that number. Although this might seme profitable to commit the charge of publike goods to no fewer, bicause many times cometh to passe, that such eyther were the more insolent, or else seeke after their priuate gayne, vnlesse they be restrayned by the rule and authoritie of others. And though no such thing fall out, yet a fewe are sooner suspected, than many standing charged with one thing. But least they might erre in their election, they diligently declare what manner of men must be ordeyned. First, they will haue them chosen out of the companie of the faythfull. Therefore none must be admitted therevnto, which is an aduersary of the fayth, or estranged from it. Then, they requyre men of a tried honestie, to thintent that publike goodes might safely be committed to them. Thirdly, they looke that they be full of the holpe ghost; not suche as are ledde and ruled

ruled altogether with filthy affections. Last of all, they will haue a respect to be had of their wisdom, that is, of their skill and dexteritie in handling of matters, because without this, the lawfull dispensation of such goodes cannot be exercised. Joyne vnto these, the thinges that Paule requireth in Deacons, and it shall easily appeare, what in these dayes is to be obserued and followed. But as in other thinges, so herein also is committed great oversight. For with the Papistes hath nothing remayned but the bare name of Deacons onely, yea, euen they that are called Gospellers, whether they bring the Church goodes to the publike Treasury, or conuert them to other vles, they commonly make such Stewardes as are straungers from the fayth, which hate the worde of God, and the Ministers thereof, who when they haue wasted and consumed their owne goodes, seeke to enriche themselves by the Church goods, whome a man may see rather full of wine, than of the holye ghost, and not ledde so much with the spirite of wisdom, as with the impotent and burly perturbations of the minde. These men grievously offende, but no lesse doe they offende, by whose voyces such men are chosen. For Paule testifieth that they are partakers of other mennes sinnes.

1. Tim. 3.

1. Tim. 5.

The duties
of Ministers
of the church.

In the thirde and last part, they declare what they themselves intende to do, least any man might suspect they sought their owne ease or ydlenesse. We (saye they) will giue our selues to prayer, and to the ministracion of the worde. By this worde (giue) they expresse an ardent and earnest industrie and endeuour, which all Ministers of the worde must haue that will doe good in their office. In two duties they comprehend the chiefe poyntes of Ecclesiasticall ministerie. The first is, doctrine or teaching, which, for that it must be taken from the mouth of God, we haue neede diligently to studie the holy scripture, in the which God speaketh to vs. Therfore Paule biddeth Timothie to applye his reading. Againe, because the same must be applyed to edification, we must take good heede that the worde of God be duely broken and deuided, that it may serue as well to instruct as to comfort euery man. But because the endeuour and diligence of the Minister is in bayne, except God giue the encrease: he must by continuall prayer be intreated, that he will vouchsafe to draue and inspire the mindes of the hearers, by his holy spirite. Christ our Lorde ioyned both these together, whose example the Apostles in thys case thinke good to imitate. Let as manye as be Ministers of the Church followe the same, and they shall perceyue that they shall not labour in bayne. For Iesus Christ that true and supreme king of the Church, shall with the grace of his holye spirite prosper their studies: to whome be blessing, honoz, power and glozy for ever. Amen.

1. Tim. 4.

1. Cor. 3.

The.xlj. Homelie.

And this saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Steuen a man full of fayth and of the holy ghost, and Philip and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas a Conuerter of Antioch. These they set before the Apostles, and when they had prayed, they layde their handes vpon them. And the worde of God increased, and the number of the Disciples

at

at Ierusalem multiplied greatly; and a great company of the Priestes were obedient vnto the sayth.



As Luke hath descrybed a sounde and moſte perſite paterne of the primitive Church: euen ſo he declareth with great diligence, the vice that ſprang in the ſame. The beginning whereof was about the Church goodes; and howe manye wayes they offended of late, we perceyued. The Apoſtles erred of ignorance, and multitude of buſineſſes, being not able to diſcharge two offices at once. But of a little errour followeth a great offence. For certain conceived and tooke occaſion hereby of diſcention, and became murmurers, ſo that now the Church ſeemed in a farre other caſe than heretofore it was, when Luke ſayde all the people were of one minde and will. The holy ghoſt ment hereby to teache vs, that no man ſhould be offended; as at a ſtraunge thing, though he perceyued ſome blemiſhe or vice to ſpring in any Church, or congregation. For what ſo much argueth vs to be men, as to erre, and to be deceyued: we muſt therefore ſtudie howe to correct theſe things, that vices ſpreade not to brode, or by delayes become incurable. The Apoſtles well noted theſe things, which calling the multitude together, modeſtly excuſed themſelues, and alſo friendly gaue counſell what was beſt to be done. This is the ende and ſcope of their counſaile, that Deacons or Stewards may be choſen, to whome both the charge of publike goodes, and alſo the ouerſight of the poore in the congregation might be committed, and leaſt they ſhoulde erre in their choyce, they diligently declare what maner of menne ought to be choſen. Then followeth what was done after the Church by their authoritie had allowed the Apoſtles counſaile. This is the ſecond part of this preſent hyltorie, wherein is deſcribed the chooſing of the Deacons of the Church: In the conſideration whereof it behoueth vs to be diligent, that we may vnderſtande what we alſo ought to doe in theſe dayes.

1. The congregation choſeth Deacons.

First, he declareth by whome the Deacons were choſen. This ſaying (ſayth he) pleaſed the whole multitude, and they choſe Steuen. &c. Then the Deacons are choſen by the conſent and authoritie of the whole Church. Therefore the chooſing of Deacons, to whome the adminiſtration of Church goodes is committed, belongeth to all the Church. For where theſe goodes be conſecrated to the whole Church, it muſt not be ſuffered, that a fewe ſhall haue the diſpoſing of them at their pleaſure, or choſe the diſpoſers of them. For ſo maye it come to paſſe, that thoſe goodes, which the godly and faithfull of a godly and chriſtian zeale, gaue for the conſeruatiſon of the Church, may be an occaſion to haue the ſame ſpoyled. It is worthy of great commendation, that Luke ſayth the counſell of the Apoſtles pleaſed them. For they perceyued it was right and neceſſary, that they whome Chriſt had appointed to preach the Goſpell, ſhoulde not be burthened with temporall affairs. They perceyued alſo that this inſtitution agreed with the example of Chriſt, who had committed to Iudas the purſe of his dayly expences, and care of the poore, for that he woulde haue neyther himſelfe nor the other Apoſtles hindered in the miniſterie of the worde. Therefore with one conſent they agree to the Apoſtles ſaying. This is the right and proper marke of the

the true Church, that she harkeneth to the voyce of hir shephearde, and strueth not agaynst Christes counsell or example. And their frowardnesse is inexcusable, which will haue nothing to be altered or chaunged, bicause they woulde not seeme to haue erred, although they see the order and forme of the Church, altogether marred and corrupted. The Lomanistes offende in this behalfe, who thinke this Maxima to be defended with tooth and nayle, that the Romaine Church cannot erre. &c. and will admit no reformation, although they are neyther able to dissemble, ne yet to excuse great errors and abuses in the same. We see diuers Gospellers also stumble at the same stone, which, while they will not swaue one strawe bredth from the first reformation of their Churches, doe not onely mainteyne olde errors in some articles, but suffer newe also dayly to aryse. Let vs therefore followe the readynesse to yelde that was in the primitive Church, least while we seeke to be clere from all suspicion of error, we become altogether distayned with errors.

Secondarily, is declared who they were that the Church did choose. For there is rehearsed a scroll of their names, in the which as Steuen is the first, so is he commended with a singuler prayse, in that it is sayde he was full of fayth and of the holy ghost. The occasion of which commendations, is partly bicause of the historie of Steuen following, and partly for that we might vnderstande, what the Church chiefly obserued in this election. For here is no yelding to priuate affections, nor no admission of ambitious mens sleights & subtelties, who are ledde eyther with desire of priuate glory or vtilitie. But they iudge that such ought to be chosen as were able to aunswere the rule prescribed by the Apostles. Yet among these was Nicholas rehearsed who (as the auncient writers saye) made his wife common, and was the authour of the detestable sect of Nicholaites, whose workes Christ sayth he hateth. Apoc. 2. Neyther coulde the whole Church with the exhortation of the Apostles vse such diligence, but such a beastly and wicked man, was able to get into this most holy order. Which certainlye was a thing both wonderfull and absurde, onlesse we were assured that aswell the affayres of all mankind, as of the Church, were ruled by Gods prouidence. And the Lorde suffred him by his iust iudgement to obteyne this notable rounne in the Church, bicause the same serued much for our instruction. For first we learne that wicked men manye times craepe, and get into the societie of those that are good and godly. For Satan ceaseth not to throwe and sowe tares among the good seede, while men sleepe. So we see Iudas was reckoned among the Apostles, whome Christ knewe to be a Deuill and Traytor. Wherefore no man ought to be offended, if the like fall out in our dayes. For God will haue his people tried and exercised. And there must needes be heresies or sectes, that the chosen may be tried. Furthermore, he maketh vs attent to examine both our selues and other, that we eyther deceyue not our selues, or suffer others to deceyue both vs and the Church. Which thing in elections, is of all other thinges to be regarded. For if the primitive Church were deceyued in hir iudgement, being feruent in an holy zeale of Christ, what thinke we will come to passe, if the corrupt affections of the flethe be taken to counsaile, or if iudgements be rashly and vnadvisedly giuen? The example of Nicholas teacheth vs further, what a care and consideration they ought to haue which thinke they

Iohn 10.

2. A scroll of
the Deacons
names.

Reade what
Eusebius wy-
teth of him,
in the thirde
booke of his
storie, and. 29
chapter, citing
Clemens A-
lexandria in
his thirde
booke,
ωισομαλῶν
for the same.

Math. 13.

Iohn. 6.

1. Cor. 11.

Rt. j.

stande

1. Cor. 10.

1. Peter. 5.

Prouer. 24.

2. Thess. 2.

Math. 24.

3. The Deacons are publicly authorized.

stande sure, least perhaps they fall. For as of nature we be prone to all kinde of vice, so the deuill our common enimie, is not idle, but walketh still by and doth like a roving Lion, seeking whome he may deuoure. Neither ought they to promise them selfe securitie and safety, which haue before their eyes the falles of so many holy men, and knowe that euen the iust man falleth seauen times in a daye. To conclude, they are reprovved by this example, which haunt themselves in the bare name of Predecessors and succession, manifestly offending agaynst the lawes of God. We see the Nicholaites which seme to haue bene the beginners of the heretikes called Gnostici, the wickedst kinde of people that euer the worlde brought forth, had this Nicholas for their author, whome the primitive Church thought not onely worthy to be of the number of the faythfull, but as farre passing others, chose him to be one of the Deacons. Paule saith that Antichrist shall sit in the very Church. And Christ out of the Prophetes teacheth vs, that abomination shall occupie the holy place. It is therefore foolishnesse to brag of succession, and holynesse of order, and not to endeavour to answer our vocation.

But let vs returne to the Deacons, whom we sayde were euen now elected, and let vs see what was furthermore done. For they enter not by and by into their office, but are first confirmed by common authoritie. And first they are set before the Apostles, as vnto whom belonged chiefly both the charge of the whole Church, and care of the poore. Wherby those new Deacons were taught, that they ought so to behaue themselves, in their office that they might be able to give an accompt to the Apostles, whose seueritie in these affayres not long before appeared in the examples of Ananias and Sapphira. By this example, the men of our dayes be reprovved, which thinke it meete, that Ministers of the worde and congregation, should be utterly debarred, from the viewe and oversight of publike goods, and that it is unfit they should talke of the distribution and distributores of Ecclesiasticall goods. Howbeit it is euident that they ought not to neglect the care of the poore, whome Christ hath put in charge with his whole church. For with what reason shall they neglect one pæce, which are bounde to see to the whole? Therefore, these men must eyther denie, that the poore belong to the Church, or else they must needs let the Ministers haue a care and oversight of them. And howe can they denie but the poore are a part of the Church, seeing Christ so tendereth them, that he taketh whatsoeuer is done to them, as done to hymselfe. But it is playne, what these men of oures hunt for, verilie euen this, that without all restraynt, and feare of discipline, and comptrolment, they may make hauck of the Church goods, at their pleasure, which goods were appoynted for the reliefe of the poore. Therefore whosoever wyll faythfully and with commendation liue in the ministerie, must not stowe or yelde to this their tyrannie. Secondly, Luke maketh mention of prayers. These the Church with one consent, powred forth, for the Deacons newly chosen, that they might obteyne for them the giftes of the holy ghost, whereof they knewe, they had most neede. They commend vnto vs by their example, the studie and care of religion, which as in all other things, so in those things which belong to the publike administration of the church, it is chiefly to be regarded. And they are not vnworthily iudged wicked, which contemptuously

lye

lye neglect prayers, eyther priuate, or publike. Furthermore we are taught, that we should pray earnestly for all them, which are in any publike office. For as such men labour not for themselves onely, but are carefull and bigilaunt for the weale publike: so, if they offend in any thing, commonly it is the occasion of some publike euill. Therefore we see howe the Church not long before, made their publike and common prayers, for the Apostles. And Paule commendeth himselfe to the publike prayers of the congregations, that he may preache the worde of saluation freely, and wyth open mouth. He commaundeth the christians, to pray for magistrates, and all other in authoritie, that they that are not able in other things, at leastwise with their prayers, myght helpe and promote the publike weale. Which was a thing so obserued in the primitive Church as Ecclesiasticall wyriters testifie, that the christians daylie prayed vnto God for the Romaine Emperours, being yet infidels. And surely it is an argument both of an vnthankfull and blockishe minde, to haue no care of them, to whom the weale publike is committed. The thirde thing in their election, was the imposition of handes, which was partly a signe of their consecration, and partly of their commission. For as the priestes in times past, vsed to laye their handes vpon the sacrifices, thereby declaring they were consecrated vnto God, so did the Apostles vse to lay handes vpon the Ministers of the Church, to the ende they might knowe they were consecrated vnto God, and be the more assured of their vocation. And it was not a little needefull for them, to be admonished hereof by a publike ceremonie. For except a man certainly vnderstande, that he is called and ordayned of God, he shall doe his dutie no longer than he seeth all things proceede prosperously. For if aduersity begin once to thunder, because he is vpholden with no hope of Gods helpe, he shall dishonestly forsake his tackle and standing. In the meane whyle let vs diligently obserue, that they ioyne prayers to the imposition of handes. For hereby they declare that the grace of the holy ghost is not tyed to the outward signe, but that it commeth from God, and is to be obteyned by godly prayer. And this is the most sincere way of making Ministers and Deacons of the Church, which it is euident the primitive church vsed many yeares. With the which if a man would compare the things that the Papistes obserue, he shall see the auncient simplicitie vtterly woone out, and all the thinges which belong to the true worship of God, and which should admonishe men of their dueties, with most bayne and colde ceremonies, all to be blotted and blurred.

But least any man might thinke this ordeining of Deacons, and so diligent a correction of this errour, had bene superfluous or vnprofitable, Luke sheweth that great vtilitie ensued therof. For the word of God increased, both for that it spread farther vnto others, and also for that it did bring forth more fruite in the mindes of them, which before had hearde and receyued it. Then agayne the number of the faythfull, whome the chiefe Bishops and priestes despyred, not onely to haue diminished, but vtterly to be extinguished, was meruaylously increased, and that in Ierusalem, where the power and authoritie of the enemies was greatest. Furthermore, not onely the commons and those of the lay see, but now also the priestes beganne to submit themselves to the obedience of fayth, and to professe Christ. These thinges haue in them marueylous consolation, if they be diligently

Rr.ij.

considere

Ephes.6.

4. The profite ensuing of the errour corrected.

considered. For they teach vs by what armes and weapons Christes church is most profitable enlarged and conserued. Merely, not with the counsailes of fleshly wisdom, or mens deuises, but with puritie of doctrine, and holy discipline, whereof this ought to be the ende, that all outward things may aunswere to the doctrine of Christ, and that such errors as happen, may diligently be corrected. And the ende and marke of all together must be the glorie of God, and the saluation of many. When these things be diligently obserued, the wiser sort (which before were feared with noueltie) beginne to giue eare to the doctrine and credite it. And no doubt, but there would be in these daies, better successe in church affayres, if we in this behalfe, were not vtterly deafe. For as though the bare profession of a christian name were sufficient to saluation, we stay ydely in the same, and are moued neyther with publike corruption of maners, and manifest errors, nor with the iust complaints of the godly, earnestly to amende the things, that ought to be amended. Therfore through our negligence and securitie, it cometh to passe that the gospell in these daies goeth no better forward. Againe, we are taught by an euident example, howe vaine and forcelesse the enterprises of the wicked are against the kingdome of Christ. For the more they rage, the more it spreadeth: and nowe the christian fayth findeth place among the priestes, which fayth before was thought vnmete to be suffered in the common people. The like thing happened while Christ was yet vpon the earth, when Nicodemus and Ioseph of Arimathæa beloued in him, whome all the residue of that order wyshed out of his life. Yea while Nero by cruell proclamations, thundred against the Church, yet were there founde in his owne Court, which professed Christ, as Paule to the Philippians wytnesseth. This is also a singuler token of the goodnesse and mercy of God, that he doth bouchsafe to illuminate with the knowledge of his truth, a many of that number, that had shed Christes bloud, and were taken to be the chiefe procurers of his death. Who shall henceforth dispute in his sinnes, when we see these men haue founde forgiveness? Let vs rather hearken to Christ, which doth of his owne accorde, offer to synners remission and peace, and did bouchsafe to pray for them, that crucified him. And yet this example serueth not onely for our consolation, but also for our instruction, that we also with like facilitie and readinesse must pardon them that doe vs iniurye. For so it shall come to passe, that we hauing the true spirite of the children of God giuen vnto vs, and being deliuered from all the debt of our trespasses, shall come to the inheritance of the heavenly kingdome, with Iesu Christ the onely begotten sonne of God: to whome be blessing, honoꝝ, power and glory for ever. Amen.

The.xlij. Homelie.

AND Steuen full of fayth and power, did great wonders and myracles among the people. Then there arose certaine of the Synagoges, which is called the Synagoge of the Libertines, and Cyrenites, and of Alexandria, and of Cilicia, and of Asia, disputing with Steuen. And they coulde not resist the wisdom, and the spirite which spake. Then sent they in men, which saide, we haue heard hym speake blasphemous wordes against Moses, and against God.

God. And they mooued the people and the elders, and the Scribes, and came vpon him and caught him, and brought him to the counsell, & brought forth false wytnesse which sayde: Thys man ceaseth not to speake blasphemous wordes against this holy place, and the lawe: for we heard him say: This Iesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall chaunge the ordinaunces which Moses gaue vs. And all that sate in the counsell, looked stedfastly vpon hym, and sawe his face as it had beene the face of an Aungell.



Or as much as our Saviour Jesus Christ, is entred into the kingdome and glory of God his father, by the bitter death of the crosse: the same lotte must all they abyde, that desyre to lyue godly, and to be partakers with him, of the heavenly kingdome. And for bicause we are offended with nothing, moze than the crosse, God would haue vs instructed and confirmed, not onely with precepts, but also with the example of the primitive church, that we should not be offended with persecution and aduersitie, as at any straunge and vnwonted thing: for as much as we see in times passed prosperous successes amōg horrible persecutions mixed, the church for al that, stil increasing. An example wherof y story that we presently haue in hand shall shewe vs, if it be compared with the things that went next before. For Luke hath declared vnto vs the most prosperous proceedings of the gospel, and how not only the common people, but also many of the priestes, beganne to beleue it. So that the church assaieses, seemed nowe to haue bene in quyet and safetie, seing it was defended by so many and such singuler Patrones. But beholde a newe conflict beginneth moze horrible and perillous than any yet before was, in the which Steuen by whose side the whole church of Christ was foyned at, was constrained to defende Christes quarrell, not onely by wordes, but also by skilful protestation of his fayth and by his bloude. The vse of the hystorie, is chiefly in thys poynt, that we must not be offended, though grievous tumults suddenly arise, when all things seeme hushie, and when they whome we hoped to haue our faythfullest defendours, eyther are not able, or wylling to helpe vs. For God suffereth it so to come to passe, to take from vs the trust in carnall helpes, and for that we shoulde learne in dede, that Christes kingdome is not enlarged, neyther by hoste of men, nor by force, but by the spirite of the Lorde. But bicause diuers other things are here concurrent, which make both for our instruction and consolation, the whole hystorie with all the circumstaunces is diligently described of Luke. First, beginning with the discription of the person, he sheweth who Steuen was, and of what calling. Then he describeth his enemies, and their attempts agaynst him. Thirde, he declareth howe Steuen behaued himselfe in this concertation, and his glorious martyrdome. Nowe will we speake of the things that belong to the treatise of this present place.

Luke in the beginning shewed how Steuen was the first in the number of the Deacons. Nowe he addeth the things making for this present hystorie. And first he sayth, he was full of fayth, doing vs to vnderstande, that he was sincere and no bragger or counterfayer of the fayth, but endued with true fayth, and feruent in the zeale of Christes glory. He ioyneth power to his fayth, whereby we vnderstande the gift of myracles, according

The descrip-
tion of Ste-
uen.

to

1. Tim.3.

Math.25.

Steuen's ad-
uersaries.Liberti were
such as had
sometime bene-
fited men. and
after, finding
fauor in their
Lords sight
were made
free and ad-
uaunced to
great dignitie

to that treatise of Paule, touching the diuision of gifts, in the first to the Corinthians. xij. Chap. And as he declared his fayth by his seruencie of zeale, so he testified that other gifte of the holy spirite, by notable myracles and wonders. And although nothing is saide of his publike sermons, it appeareth yet by order of the text, that he was to preach both often, earnestly and effectuously. Wherefore, we may here note by the way, that the Deacons in the primitive Church were not whollye debarred from the ministerie of the worde, but although they were chieflye busied about distribution of the Church goodes, yet they bestowed their labour as farre as they were able in other seruices of the Church, that by this meane as Paule sayth, they might winne themselves a good degree. Here chieflye is to be obserued the veritie of Chyestes promises, whereby he instructeth his faythfull and industrious seruauntes. For he sayth, they shall be set ouer great and many thinges, which are faithfull in small matters. He promyseth, that they that haue, shall receyue more. Steuen proueth the same true, as this place teacheth. For where he well blessed the giftes of the holy ghost, which he had in the beginning, and did faithfullye administer temporall goodes, he is encreased with more giftes, and aduaunced to higher degree, yea being made match with the Apostles, he beginneth to distribute the eternall and heauenlye treasures of the Gospell, with great prayse and vtilitie, whome Chyest hath vouchsafed to adourne with the crowne of martyrdomme. Let vs therefore be stirred vp with the consideration of this example, & not suffer our selues to be pulled backe from well doing, with the consideration of our vnworthynesse, whereas we maye attaine to the increasing of the holy ghost, by fayth and diligence, and may prepare for our selues an entrance and degree into more excellent ministeries.

Howbeit this valiant and stout souldiour of Chyest, findeth by and by such as withstoode his godly purposes and enterprises. For there stood by men of diuers Nations, of the schoole or Colledge of the Libertines, which disturbed and troubled him. For where the cite of Ierusalem was ordeyned to be a place both for outwarde religion, and for an vniuersitie and studie of the lawe: there were in it diuers Colledges of Jewes, which eyther for religion sake, or for studie, came thither from diuers nations: of the which number this Synagoge of the Libertines was, who were the principall and chiefe Captaines of this conspiracie, deuised against Steuen. But howe this Synagoge came so to be called, there are diuers opinions amongst the Interpreters. Howbeit, I lyke best their opinion, which suppose there was a certaine Colledge builded by those of Rome which were called Liberti, wherein straungers were taught and instructed. For we knowe that these Liberti were of great power and authoritie, and that many of them went about to winne the fauor of the people, by such benefites, we learne by example of the Centurion, whome the Priestes for this cause commended vnto Chyest, because he had builded them a Synagoge. But it is not without a cause that Steuen is resisted, by men of diuers Nations, and such as are learned, and of experience. For as the mysteries of the kingdome of Chyest, are for the most part hidden from the wylde of the worlde: so the greater is the glory of the Saintes, which they get by such conflicts. This serueth also to comfort vs, that we yelde not for feare, if at any time we see our selues assaulted by many and furnished enemies. Now

it is profitable to consider after what sorte, and with what conueyances, these conspirators appoint their onset against Steuen.

Luke sayth they beginne with disputation, the ende and drift wherof as appeareth, was none other but to catch & entangle him in his owne words, which thing the Scribes also many times assayed against Christ. For trusting in their wit & learning, they hoped easily to haue the victorie of a rude and vnlearned bodie, or at least such an one as yet had no great name of learning. But the matter fell out farre otherwise than they looked for. For he whome they supposed to be rude and vnprouided, being instructed with heauenly wisdom, and prompted with the holy spirite, doth not onely answer the questions they propone, but vseth such plentie and force of argumentes, that they by no meanes were able to resist him. Whereby we see agayne, that Christ who is the very truth it selfe, neuer fayleth of his promise. He promised his spirite to be a comforter and counseller, to lead those that be his into all truth. He promised them vtterance and wisdom, against the which, men shoulde not be able to stande. He hath hitherto performed his promises, as we haue seene in the examples of the Apostles. And the treasure of this heauenly wisdom is not yet spent and drawne out, but Steuen also draweth out thereof such things as are necessary in this conflict. Let no man therefore feare eyther the wisdom or authoritie of the worlde, forasmuch as it is not our businesse but Christes that we haue in hande, who is made vnto vs of his father, wisdom, and in whome all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom are hidden. Let vs also consider that he is greater than is in vs, than he which maketh suche a stirre in the worlde.

But doe these Sophisticall Libertines being overcome by disputation, yelde? No, but turning them vnto vnlawfull and craftie conueyances, they labour to oppresse him by lyes and false witness, whome they perceyued strengthened with truth, and therefore inuincible. They suborned men that had their tongues to sell, which through flanders went about to bring the most faythfull Preacher of Christ in enuye of all the people. And of these we will speake a little hereafter. Nowe let vs consider how farre they vse to go, which nourishe hatred in their heartes agaynst the truth, and will not yelde being yet ouercommen. Such men are giuen vp into a reprobate sense, and become so blinde, that vnder the pretence of godlye zeale, wherein they wickedly glorie, they thinke they may doe what they will, and feare not mooste manifest and heynous wickednesse. For these Libertines coulde not be ignorant of the lawe of Talio, appoynted by God, for false witness. And though there were no lawes anye where extant, yet common reason teacheth vs, that they commit greivous a fault, which eyther beare false witness themselves, or else bring forth and alledge false witness. But they that burne in hatred of the truth, make no count of these thinges, and it cometh to passe by the iust iudgement of God, that they are bereft of common reason, and therefore pollute themselves with great wickednesse, chasing and driuing away the truth, after the hath thyned in their heartes. There are diuers examples hereof extant as well olde as newe, amongst which this one is very notable, which the Bishops of the Counsell at Constance vsed towardes Iohn Husse, agaynst all right and lawe, whome they were not afrayde with breach of their owne promise, and the Emperours

Steuen is set
on by dispu-
tation.

Iohn.14.

Luke.11.

1. Cor. 1.
Coloss. 2.

1. Iohn. 4.

False wit-
nesses are
brought as
gainst Steuen.

Talio, is
when the doer
suffreth such
like damage
and hurt him-
selfe, as he
doth to an o-
ther. Looke
the place.
Deuter. 19.

safe conduct, cruelly to burne, hauing none other cloke to excuse their heynous fact, but that promise was not to be kept vnto heretikes. Let no man therefore marueyle, though he perceyue him vniustlye and vniworthlye entreated. In the meane season let vs learne in the beginning to quench the fire of hatred, glimmering against the truth, least we also fall into the lyke blindnesse and incurable frowardenesse.

Steuens is
oppressed
with sedition
and raben.

Now, because the importunacie of a fewe coulde little or nothing preuaile agaynst the doctrine of the truth, these most subtil Sophisters labored earnestly to set al the people with the Elders & Scribes in Steuens top. And as may be gathered by the circumstances, they rayse an open tumult in the citie, meaning to apprehend him and bring him before the counsell. Which is an olde pollicie of Satan, meaning to make them away in an vprore or sedition, whom they see armed with the defence of truth and lawe. But moste times it cometh to passe, that they which with seditious sleightes assault the truth, do most miserably perish by sedition, as we may see it hath hapned to the nation of the Jewes. And here is set forth a notable example of the leuitie & inconstancie of the common people. It was declared before, how the Apostles and all the Church were in great estimation with the people, both for the notableness of theyr myracles, and also for the shew of an heauenly, and as it were, diuine maiestie that shone in them. But now a number circumuented with the sleightes of these Sophisters, stande by against the doctrine of truth. The lyke lightnesse in the people did Christ also finde, whome one whyle they woulde haue made a king, another whyle like mad men they cried out to haue him crucified. So the men of Lystra at the first cried out, saying Paule was a God, but within a whyle after, they woulde haue stoned him. And many like doinges we reade in the histories of the Gentiles, the vse of all which is, that we hunt not for prayse of the people, nor studie not to please the worlde, but rather God, whose will is certaine, and remayneth stable and vnmoueable.

Actes. 14.

Steuens is ac-
cused of im-
pietie and ob-
stinacie.

Nowe let vs see what thinges they laide to Steuens charge by these false witneses, whom Luke saith they brought before the Counsell. The summe of their accusation is: This man ceaseth not to speake blasphemous wordes against this holy place, and against the lawe. He is therefore accused of impietie, and not thereof only, but also of incurable obstinacie, which hitherto by no reasons coulde be perswaded. They make mention of the holy Citie and Temple by name, because it seemed to the Jewes an intollerable impietie to speake or intende any thing against these places, being commended by so many promises of God. Therefore this was chiefly laid to Hieremies charge, that he prophesied against the holy Citie and Temple. But because it behoued the crime shoulde be proued by witneses, and that the blasphemies shoulde be declared more plainely what they were, they adde: for we haue hearde him saye, howe this Iesus of Nazareth shall destroye this place, and shall chaunge the ordinances which Moses gaue vs. Therefore where they thought both their religion and their Citie shoulde endure for euer, they iudged him that shoulde saye any thing touching the destruction thereof to be a wicked body. Furthermore, whence they tooke hold of this accusation, may easily be gathered of the Apostles doctrine. For they taught that men were iustified and saued by the mere grace of God, through the merite of Iesus Christ, and that nothing in the businesse of our saluation, was to be attributed ey-

Hierem. 26.

ther

ther to mannes woꝝkes, oꝝ outwaꝝd ceremonies. Foꝝ the one were polluted and imperfite, and the other were shadowes and figures of the redemption in Chꝛist to come, which Chꝛist had put aꝝaye in the sacrifice of hys owne body, as might be gathered of the renting of the Temple, which happened at the death of Chꝛist. They also exhorted al men to cast aꝝay al their vaine hope in the righteousnesse of the lawe, and to embrace with sure faith the righteousnesse of God, offered them in Chꝛist. The which thing, bicause they woulde the moꝝe easilye perswade them, they called to their remembrance the peril of present destruction, wherof Chꝛist oftentimes had warned them. Therefore the craftie and most impudent sclaunders, take occasion of their accusation hereof, saying: Steuen spake of the abolishing of their religion, and destruction of the Citie, but they craftily conceale the causes moꝝving him so to saye. Yea, they so set foꝝth the matter, as though Steuen shoulde seeme to haue threatened to set the temple on fire: and speaking very contemptuously of Chꝛist, they compare him as it were, with the gloꝝe and magnificencie of the Temple, to make his doctrine to be the moꝝe despised. This place is with all diligence to be obserued. Foꝝ as it teacheth vs that truth foꝝ the most part is assaulted with lyes: so it plainly warneth vs that Chꝛistes doctrine can neuer be so wysely and modestly preached, but that the wicked woꝝld wil take occasion to sclaunder the same. We finde it to be true in these our corrupted dayes, wherewithin whatsoeuer the faythfull teachers of the truth say, is most vniustly carped at. Foꝝ where we teach, that men are iustified by the mere grace of God, & that our strength and woꝝkes haue no prayse in the case of our saluation, by and by we are called the enemies of good woꝝkes, and mainteyners of carnall libertie. Agayne, if we say, that whatsoeuer belongeth to our saluation, is conteyned in Chꝛist onely, bicause he is the onely mediatour, aduocate, and intercessor, appoynted betwene God and vs: streyght way we are condemned as wicked blasphemers of the blessed Virgin, and Saintes. Item, if we go about to deliuer the Church of Chꝛist, from the intollerable yoke of humane traditions, to correct abuses, and to restore the auncient simplicitie of the primitive Church, by and by there start vp, that crie out, we are aduersaries of religion, and the true woꝝshippe of God, deprauers of the Sacramentes, and robbers of God of his honour. And if we declare vnto the woꝝlde, drowined in the filthy flowes of wickednesse, the imminent woꝝath of God, and the punishments long agone deserued therefore: then we are condemned and called at, as disturbers of publike tranquillitie, and sowers of sedition. And to be bꝛiefe, nothing can be done so soundly, so godly, and so modestly, that can escape the censure and checke, of the sclaunders and enuious aduersary. But no man must be so moued with these things, that he must leaue oꝝ forsake the charge committed to him of the Lorde. Let vs consider that this is the olde guyse of the woꝝld, agaynst the which we must both constantly & prudently strue and resist. Let vs likewise be encouraged with the testimonies of the Scripture, which promisseth that the godly are not forgotten with God, but haue layd vp foꝝ them in heauen, a most plentifulous rewarde. In the meane season, the woꝝlde shall not scape scot free, foꝝ their shamelesse sclaundering, but as the Iewes were enforced with extreme miserie, to abide the horrible destruction of their Citie and nation, which they would not haue had the Apostles to speake of: so this is alwaies

Psal. 34.
Math. 5.

Steuen in the
daunger of
death is not
afrayde.

A notable hi-
storie maner
wayes to
comfort the
persecuted for
religion.

founde true, that they shall feele the smart of deedes that will not be amended by wordes, and disdain to be threatened.

But what sayth Steuen in all this adoe, which is snatched at of euery one, lyke a sheepe in the middle of a sort of Woolues? Is he dismayed with feare? betrayeth he his feare of heart with palenesse of face or trembling? Nay, rather he rendreth a reason of his sayth and doctrine with great boldnesse and libertie, and sharply reprehendeth their impietie, and incurable contending with God, as we shall see in the chapter following. And least any man should ascribe his saying vnto rayling, it is declared, that there shyned in his countenance, a token of a couragious minde and conscience, reioysing in Christ. For where the Judges (as is oft times sene) earnestly countenaunced him, they sawe his face, as it had bene, the face of an Angel. This me thinketh is to be expounded of an vnaccustomed, and more than humane brightnesse, wherewith God would dazell the eyes of his enimies, to the intent they should perceyue, that such as he was, feared them not. And without all doubt, Steuen in the meane whyle, had some incredible comfort of Gods spirite, rysen in his minde. Furthermore, God gaue him herein a token or taste of the glorie to come, thorow the hope wherof, they may overcome all aduersitie, that shall happen to be in daunger for the testimonie of his name. Examples wherof we haue many in the histories of Martyrs, amongst the which, one that was to be sene not farre from vs, about thirtie yeres past, is worthy for ever to be remembred. A certaine husbandman of the countrie, for his profession of the gospell, was brought to the fyre to be burned. And where before, whyle he was in prison, he had shewed manie tokens of a christian stoutnesse: yet the nether his death approached, the more euident the same appeared. For being bounde to the Gybet, and ready to be let downe into the fyre, he sayde aloud, that he would fayne speake to the Iustice eare he dyed, to whome when he came (though the Iustice vsed many delayes to put him off) he said on thys wise: Sir quoth he, you haue this daye condemned me to be burned for heresie. Nowbeit though I confesse my selfe a sinner, yet I acknowledge no cryme of heresie in me. For I professe and embrace with all my heart, that sayth which is conteyned in the Apostles Craede, and so recyted the articles thereof. Nowe good Sir (sayth he) I craue this last bowne or petition of you, that you would lay your hande first on my heart, and then on your owne, and so testifie vnsafely vnto this people, here standing about, whether your hart or mine, quake and tremble more for feare. I truly with cherefull heart, haste vnto Christ, in whome I haue beloued. Nowe of what minde and opinion you be, see you to it. The Iudge had neuer a worde to say, but bade hast the execution: so yet that there was perceyued more penituenesse in his countenance, than in the Martyrs. This is a great glorie of our sayth, that euen then it most comforteth and cheareth our hartes, when all things seeme most horrible and fearefull. Let vs therefore labour to keepe thys sayth with all diligence, that hauing passed the race of thys lyfe, and goulfe of persecutions, with merie myndes and cherefull conscience, we may attayne to the top of the glorie in heauen, promised vs in Christ Iesu: to whome be blessing, honour, power and glorie, for euer. Amen.

The

The seuenth chapter vpon the *Actes of the Apostles.*

The.xliij.Homelie.

THEN sayde the highe Priest, is it euen so? But he sayde: ye men and brethren, hearken: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was yet in Mesopotamia, before hee dwelt in Charran, and sayde vnto him: Go out from thy countrie and from thy kyndred, and come into the lande which I shall shewe thee. Then he went out of the lande of the Chaldeys, and dwelt in Charran: And from thence after his father was deade, hee brought hym into thys lande, in the which yee nowe dwell.



We haue heard how the blessed martyr Steuen was accused of his enemies, through false wytnesses, that he was a blasphemour of God, & of the law giuen by Moses, & how he threatned both the cite & the Temple with destruction. These things are set forth to thys ende, that we should vnderstande, how the first Martyr of the Apostolike Church in the beginning, as well as all the other afterwarde, were oppressed with false accusations, and that we should learne hereby, what case the Ministers of the truth

stande in, in this worlde, and all others which go about to promote the glorie of God, and the common saluation of all people. For such are iudged for wicked enemies of Gods glorie, and of publike tranquillitie, as Christ oftentimes admonished, and hath bene declared long sithence, by the examples of many. Therfore the wronge iudgements of the men of our dayes, concerning the mynisterie and Ministers of the truth, ought not to offende any man, wherby he should lystn the lesse vnto Gods calling. But bicause we spake of these things in the last sermon, and at dyuers other times, we wyll nowe let them passe, and intreate of this present place, in the which Luke sheweth howe thys matter was handeled, in the counsell.

And first he beginneth with the highe priest and sayth, he demaunded whether these things were euen so as was declared by Steuens accusers, yea or no: Wherein is set forth vnto vs, a notable example of craft and wylineesse, wherewith these counterfeyte Bishops vse to set on the Ministers and followers of the truth. For therfore doth he aske Steuen this question, and prouoke him to aunswere, for that he would vnder the visage of iustice deceyue the vnwarie, as though he gaue Steuen libertie to pleate

How & wies
hed suffer
Christs
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entreated of
in Councils.

and defende his matter, where it is euident he ment nothing lesse. For as yet that wicked decre, whereby they had forbidden all men to preache in the name of Iesus, stode with these men in force. And now he enquireth not, touching the right or equitie of the deepe, but simplie of the fact onely, as though it might seme a sufficient accusation to all men, if Steuen shoulde haue bene founde to haue sayde any of the things, which were objected to him by his vngodlye accusers. The lyke trade vse our persecutors in these dayes, neyther beginne they any other wayes with the true worshippers of Christ, than to know, by their owne confession, whether they haue spoken any thing, against their receyued superstition, abuses, and errors of Popish tyranny, yea or no. Which thing if once it appere, by and by sentence of death is pronounced, neyther will they heare any reasons or argumentes, whereby they are able to defend their doings. So that if any man confesse, he haue denied the intercession of Saintes, and hath spoken agaynst the superstitious worshipping of them, he is streight way condemned of heresie, and not permytted to giue any accompt of his doctrine in that behalfe. Likewise he is iudged an heretike, that speaketh against the sacrifice of the Masse, against the fyre of Purgatorie, against the supremacie of the See of Rome, against selling of pardons, and diuers such lyke merchaundises, and farther reasons of his doing or teaching, will they not heare. Let vs well note these thinges, that they beguile not the simple, when they see they giue vs free libertie in the counsell to pleate our matter. For there lyeth a Snake in the grasse: and they couet nothing else of vs, but the confession of the truth, which of all other things, they most hate and detest.

The argu-
ment of Ste-
uens oration.

But let vs heare Steuens aunswere, which consisteth of a whole narration or historie taken of the first Origene, and beginning of the Jewische Nation, and comprehendeth in it, the chiefe benefites of God bestowed in times past, vpon the fathers, with the deedes done againe by them, eyther good or euill. What the ende and scope of the whole discourse is, may easily be gathered of the poyntes of his accusation. The chiefe pointes wherof were, that hee had blasphemed God and the lawe. Therefore he beginneth to purge himselfe of impietie, and least he might seme to beguile them with vaine and trifling arguments, he doth vtterly protest, that he is altogether boyde of such impietie against God and his ordinances. His first argument consisteth herein, that he acknowledgeth and preacheth the same God that whylome wrought diuers things among the fathers, and whom they onely worshipped. Then proueth he that he ought not to be iudged vngodly, for abrogating the lawe and the ceremonies, for as much as the fathers in time passed pleased God without the lawe and ceremonies, onely by the obedience of fayth, and that the same God liked not many of them, after the lawe and ceremonies were instituted. And thereof hee euidently proueth, that the lawe and ceremonies had a farre other vse and ende, than that men could be iustified and saued by them: but rather that such a way of saluation was shadowed by the same as was at length, accomplished in Christ: and that therefore the ceremonies were to be let passe, and Christ to be embraced by true fayth. And at length, for that he woulde driue them from their vaine assurance in the fathers, he setteth before their eyes, their stubborne and incurable impietie, accusing them earnestly that they had lieffer to followe their Progenitors, than those auncient and holy fathers, which
through

through fayth pleased God. And thys is the summe of all Steuens oration, wherein we are taught, after what sort, and howe boldly we ought to defende Gods quarrell, agaynst the enimies thereof. Here appeareth also a marueylous power of the holy ghost, which could instruct him with so perfite a knowledge of diuinitie, and with so great boldnesse of minde, that being set in the middle of these Wolves, he could so wisely giue an account of his doctrine and faith, and so constauntly contempne his enimies. Which example ought to encourage vs, to thinke that the power of the holy ghost, can not be overcome with the stoutenesse and frowardnesse of the wicked. Let vs see nowe the beginning of his oration, conteyned in thys place.

The beginning is brieue and short: For he sayth: yee men and brethren hearken. He calleth them brethren, because of countrie sake, by which name the Jewes vsed often to salute one an other: and fathers for the dignitie and office sake which they were in, by Gods appointment, whose authoritie he wyllyngly acknowledgeth, although he knewe them to be very corrupt and wicked. Yet is he not so amazed at their dignitie, that he thinketh it unfit, to dissent from them, but rather he plainely and freely speaketh his iudgement, and accuseth them of errour. By this example we are taught, that the christian fayth doth not abolishe the duties of humanitie and ciuilitie, which we owe vnto them that are in authoritie and dignitie aboue vs. For although touching the state of saluation, there is no differences of persons in Christ Iesu (as Paule teacheth) yet the degrees of dignitie remaine, and Christ hath not abolished the lawe of God the father, which commaundeth vs to honour our parents, and to rise vp vnto a gray head, and as the same Apostle witneseth, it is the propertie of christian modestie, that one goe before an other in honor. Yet the chiefe care woulde be of Gods will, and of the duetie we owe vnto him, least we dissemble the truth, for mans sake, the confession whereof, Christ euery where requyrez of vs. Neyther must we at any time, forget that Apostolike, and verie christian Maxima or sentence that teacheth vs, we must rather obey God than men. As therefore by the example of Steuen, the barbarous vncurtesie of certaine frenetike persons is condemned, who to shew themselves christians, salute princes, and all others in authoritie, by none other name than brethren: so is the tyranny of them also confuted, which thinke it not meete, that any man should gaine say the Bishops of Rome, because their authoritie is confirmed by prescription of so many yeares, and priuiledge of so many Princes. But vaine and ridiculous is the glorying in mans authoritie, seeing it was lawfull for the Apostles, to dissent from them, whose power was ordeyned of God, and whome they acknowledged for fathers, by reason of Gods institution. The plainenesse and simplicitie of the gentile Philosopher is much to be commended, which sayde: Socrates is my friend, but truth is more my friend. What vnrightheousnesse is it therfore, to require of christian men, that they should haue more regarde of the Antichrist of Rome, than of Christ, and his eternall truth?

But let vs retorne vnto Steuen, which beginneth his narration wyth Abraham the father of the Jewishe nation, because they did most glorie in him. And by his example, he proueth, that the ceremonies of the law, are not necessarie to saluation, and that they are not to be thought wicked and blasphemous, which preach they are abrogated, because Abraham in tyme past

The getting
of attention
and good wil.

Gallat.3.
Col.3. &c.

Rom.12.

Abraham
pleased God
without the
ceremonies of
the lawe.

past pleased God without them. The circumstances of place and tyme, make for the amplification of the argument. For least they might thinke, that God had any respect to the lande of promise, he sheweth that God called Abraham forth, being yet in Chaldaea or Mesopotamia, and that after Thares hys father was dead (by reason of whose age or sicknesse, it is lyke he stayed in Charran) he came into the lande of Chanaan, where he receyued the seale of circumcision. Nowebeit bicause all things are wrytten for our instruction, we must applie the example of Abraham, not onely to this present cause, but also to our selues, and there shall no little profite ensue vnto vs, if we well consider the calling of God, and the fayth or obedience of Abraham.

God calleth
vnto salua-
tion.

In the begin-
ning of hys
first booke as
gainst he-
retyes.

Rom.4.

Ephes.1.

1. Cor.4.

Ephes.2.

1. Cor. 2.

Esay. 64.

In the calling of God, whereby Abraham came out of Vr in Chaldaea, into the land of Chanaan, are two things principally to be considered. The first is, that he was called without any merite or desert of his before going. For Iehosuah in his.xliij. Chapter testifieth that he dwelt among Idolaters, and worshipped straunge Gods. Yea, Epiphanius by report of auncient wryters sayth that Thares Abrahams father was the first that made ymages of claye, and that therfore he was punished of God with the death of Haran his sonne, who was the first among the auncient fathers, that of naturall death died before his father. Neyther coulde he be commended, bicause he was circumcised or was in the time of the Temple, whereof the one was built many yeares after, the other was a signe of the couenaunt made with him, whereas the righteousnesse of fayth which he had alreadye attayned, was sealed and confirmed. The seconde is, howe all this calling dependeth vpon the bare worde of God. For he is commaunded to forsake his countrie and kindred, and saith nothing that might cause him to looke or hope for any better state or condition. For God promised him neither trustier friendes, nor fruitfuller countrie, but speaking directly, sayth: Come into the lande which I shall shewe thee. These things are worthy to be diligently obserued. For first they teach vs, that we are called to saluation, and to the heavenly countrie (whereof the lande of Chanaan was sometime a figure) thzough the mere grace of God, without respect of any our workes or deserts in this matter. For what had we deserued, seeing we were chosen in Christ before the world was made: Or what can they bragge of, that haue nothing but that they haue receyued: And surely, if we consider the disposition of our nature, it shall appeare that we are no more mindefull of the heavenly Countrie before we be called and drawen, than Abraham was of the land of Chanaan, whose name he had not heard of, yea, when the Lord calleth vs, we proue the vntowarde nature of the fleshe stryuing agaynst Gods calling, which we can neuer be able to overcome, except we be holpen by the effectuous drawing of the holye spirite. Furthermore, we are taught, that our vocation which offereth vs saluation, dependeth vpon the onely worde of God, and therfore can not be taken holde of by fleshye sense, or mannes reason, but by fayth onely (which also is the gift of God) For the naturall man perceyueh not the things belonging to the spirit of God. And God hath prepared such things for them that loue him, as neyther eye hath seene, nor eare hearde, nor yet hath entred into the heart of man. And here the power of fayth marueylously declareth it selfe, which only taketh holde of the promises of God, and most surely embraceth those things that farre

farre & reede all sense and capacitie of mannes reason. Therfore Paule calleth it a sure confidence of things which are hoped for, and a certeyntie of things which are not seene. These things ought well to be considered of them who thinke the doctrine of the iustification of fayth, so light a matter, as though it appoynted to easie a waye vnto saluation, and so mainteyned the securitie and licentiousnesse of the fleshe. For how can that be iudged a light and easie matter that surmounteth and passeth all the powers of man? Or shall we account it a matter of greater weyght before God, that men doe of their owne power, than that that cannot be done without the power of the holy ghost? Let vs compare fayth with all the workes of all the Monkes that euer were, and yet shall we finde more, yea, and perfiter workes among the Philosophers of the Gentyles: but fayth shall we be able to shewe in none, but in him that is borne agayne of the word of God, through the holy spi rite. Therefore our saluation and iustification is iustly ascribed to the greatest and excellentest thing that any man liuing can haue vpon the earth.

Nowe, the beliefe and obedience of Abraham following the calling of God, is very wonderfull. There were diuers thinges which myght haue lette and hindzed him. For to let passe all other, great is the force of our native soyle and countrie, and draweth men (as the Poet sayth) with a great desire and lyking, and still maketh them mindefull thereof. And it is no small authoritie, that kinsfolke and allyaunce be of, whome we then most behemently loue, when we be ready to forgo them. The age also and infirmite of his father myght haue stayed him, whereof he dyed before he came to the borders of the Countrie promised. And it is also likely, that Abraham was in great honor in his countrie, such as he coulde not easly hope for, in a forreyne lande, among straungers. But none of all these things, coulde withholde that godly brest, but that without delaye he woulde followe the vocation of God, wythout any curious enquire of the condicion and state of the Countrie. This is that obedience of fayth so oftentimes commended of Paule, and which he sayth is the ende of the lawe. This doth Christ require of vs, where he commaundeth vs to forsake father, mother, sister, brother, wife, childzen, and our selues, if we will be his Disciples. And the accomplishment hereof is so difficult a thing, that it is vndoubtedly impossible for vs to performe it, except we be regenerate and borne againe of the holy spi rite, as Christ teacheth, disputing with Nichodemus. Therefore let them that desire to be called Christians, examine themselves after this rule, least whyle they rashly bragge thereof, they become lyke foolish builders, who go about to set vp some great building, before they haue cast the charges thereof. Let this consideration awake vs, incessantly to make our feruent prayers, for the increase of fayth, that after the losse of all these worldlye goodes, we maye come to the inheritance of the heauenly Countrie, with Iesus Christ our sauour: to whome be prayse, honor, power, and glorie for euer. Amen.

The.xliij. Homelie.

AND he gaue him none inheritance therein, no nor so much as one foote, and promised that he woulde giue it him to possesse, and to his seede after,

whereas

Heb.2.

Abraham, an
example of
the obedience
of fayth.

2. Cor.10.
Rom.1.
&.16.

Iohn.3.

Luke.14.

whereas yet he had no sonne. God sayde on this wyse, thy seede shall be a sojourner in a straunge land, and they shall make them bonde, and intreate them euill fower hundred yeares. And the Nation whome they shall serue, I will iudge sayth the Lorde. And after that they shall come forth and serue me in this place.



Because Steuen was accused as a publike enimie of Gods glory and all religion, by reason of his doctrine of abrogation of the lawe and ceremonies, he appoynteth such a state and ende of his aunswere, as whereby he proueth, that although he teache the ceremonies of the lawe to be abrogated, yet he ought to be iudged neyther impious, nor enimie vnto Gods honor. This he proueth, not with baine shewe and noyse of wordes, but plainly and in dede. For he recounteth diligently how God delt with the fathers in the olde time, partly to proue that he acknowledged the true God, whome the fathers sometime worshipped, and partly to shewe that iustification and saluation is not tyed to the ceremonies of the lawe, bicause the fathers serued God and pleased him without them, whereby he gathereth also, that he is no aduersarie to true religion, considering he beateth downe but those things which the fathers might well forbear, and which were instituted to that ende, to signifie the true trade and waye of saluation, which is onely conteyned in Iesus Christ. And he fetcheth his beginning from Abraham, of whome they most bragged. And first he sayth, that when he was yet beyonde the riuer, among such as worshipped straunge Gods, he was called of more fauour into the lande of Chanaan, (which is a figure of the celestiall country) before the Temple was eyther builded, or the ceremonies of the lawes instituted. And he declareth that the Scripture sayth nothing of Abraham, but of the obedience of hys faith, wherethrough he followed God, when he called him, and embraced the fauour and grace offred him. Wherby he goeth about to prouoke the chiefe of the Jewes, to forsake their superstitious obseruation of ceremonies, and to embrace Iesus Christ, the onely authoz of true saluation, by sure faith. But bicause in the iudgement of the fleshe, faith seemeth a thing not of so great weyght and force as can purchase vs saluation, Steuen builieth himselfe earnestly in setting forth the faith of Abraham, to thende he woulde declare, that faith is of such force, that it passeth all power and capacite of mannes reason. For through thys faith, Abraham so ouercame the loue of his sweete Countrie, the familiaritie of his kinsfolke, the enioying of dignitie and honor, the laborious paynes and griefes of iourneying, sorowes and cares, and whatsoeuer is eyther pleasaunt or ykesome to the fleshe, that without any tariaunce or delay, he obeyed the calling of God. For declaration whereof this present place also maketh, where the notable faith of Abraham is more fully sette forth, if by any meanes he myght kindle in them anye desire or loue vnto the same, which thing bicause we also stande in neede of, it shall preuayle vs to consider euery thing diligently.

Abraham's
faith is set
forth.

Steuen goeth about to declare what God did vnto Abraham after he came into the lande of promise, and thus he sayth: And hee gaue him none inheritance in the same, no not so much as one foote, but promised he woulde giue it

him

him to possesse, and to his seede after him, when as yet he had no chylde. In which wordes thre thinges be conteyned, which make much to the setting forth of Abrahams fayth. First, when he came into the lande promised, and shewed him throught many labors and perils, he founde it not emptie, but inhabited and possessed of the Chanaanites, a very fierce people. And he was so farre from the possessing of it, that he coulde not say, there was one foote of grounde there that was his. Yea, he felt euery daye more misfortunes than other. For he had scarce set vppe his Tentes, but he was constreyned through famine to flie in to Egypt. Then returning againe from thence, his Nephewe Lot and he which was an onely comfort among such despitefull people, brake company, and departed the one from the other, by reason of their hardmen and shepheardes contention and falling out. And not long after he was wrapped in perillous warres agaynst the kinges of the East. And to let passe diuers other things, when Sara his wyfe died, he was fayne to buye of Ephron the Hethite, a place to burie hir in. Might he not therefore thinke he was deceiued of his hope? This done, he sheweth what stayed and comforted Abraham in all these aduersities and troubles, verily the promise of the lande that God had made him. But howe vncomfortable a thing it is to trust a bare promise, without any further assurance or confirmation, dayly experience teacheth, specially if the successe of thinges agree not with the promise, as we sayde erewhyle in this matter came to passe. But a thirde thing there is yet more grieuous than all the reast, which is, that Gods promise to mannes wisdomes myght seeme ridiculous. For God promised this lande to Abrahams seede or posteritie, whereas he had no childe, and by reason of his age, was vnlyke to haue any hereafter, being an hundred yeares olde, and Sara his wyfe barren, and past bearing of children. Who therefore seeth not howe many wayes and howe strongly Abrahams fayth was shaken and assaulted, and howe great occasions he had to distrust Gods promises? But none of all these things coulde banquish or quayle that godly hart. For he beleued in hope beyonde all hope, and regarded not his owne body which was nowe deade, nor howe his wyfe Sarah was past chylde bearing: he stackered not at the promise of God through vnbeliefe, but became strong in fayth, and gaue God the prayse, being full certified that hee which had promised the same, was able also to make it good. And this is that fayth which Moyse sayth was imputed to him for righteousnesse.

Moreouer, as Steuen goeth about to stirre by the Jewes vnto fayth, by the example of Abraham, so the consideration of the same example, must serue for our instruction. For as Paule sayth: These thinges are not written bicause of him onely, but also for our behoofe, to whome after like sort, fayth shall be imputed for righteousnesse, if we diligently follow the steppes of Abraham. It shall be verie profitable for the confirmation of our fayth, if we note howe God vseth to exercise his beloued, while he so ordreth things in thys worlde, that all the successe and effect of them seemeth contrarie to his promises, which thing in the hystorie of Abraham, is more manifest, than needeth to be proued with manye wordes. Neyther was the state of Isaac his sonne, and afterwarde of Iacob any better. For when God had cast vpon Iacob the priuiledge of maiortie, or first begotten, and had amplified the same with many and great promises, for feare of Esau his brother, he was fayne to returne to the place, from whence his Graundfyrer

Rom. 4.

Gene. 15.

God exerci-
seth the fayth
and patience
of those that
be his.
Roma. 4.

Psal. 89.
Psal. 233.

Math. 16.

Roma. 8.

The place.
Gene. 15.

Abraham came, and there with his unkinde and churlish Uncle serued like a bonde seruaunt, his brother Esau, whome God had reiected, flowing in wealth, and ruling like a king, all the meane season. We reade the same came to passe vnto Dauid also, who hauing receiued a promise of God to be king of Israell, before he was set in his throne, was banished his countrie, and proclaymed for a Rebelle, and publike enimie of the kingdome and his countrie. And none other state be we all in, if we consider the case of our saluation, and the condition of Christes kingdome, into the which, through fayth we be grafted and receyued. To them that belæue in Christ, is promised peace, safetie, ioye, saluation and victorie, against the worlde, and Satan the prince of the worlde. But if a man consider the course of this worlde, he shall perceyue, that the faythfull are exercised with perpetuall troubles, aduersities and calamities, and be in subiection to the will and pleasure of Tyrannes: But shall we doubt of Gods trueth, whyle these things thus fall out, and complayne that we are beguiled wpyth false promises? No. But let vs learne rather that Christes kingdome is not of this worlde, and that we must not iudge of it according to the outward shewe and appearaunce of it. Let vs also learne to extend the eyes of our fayth further, and to haue a regarde vnto the promyses of God, which will neuer fayle, notwithstanding this unhappie worlde tolle and turmoyle neuer so much. For it is Gods saying: My couenaunt will I not breake, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lippes. He seeth the counsailes and deuises of Nations and princes, and not onely seeth them, but bringeth them to naught, but his counsaile standeth fast for euer. And thys is chieflly to be vnderstanded of the promises of our saluation, the truth whereof is inuolable, because they are founded on Christ, against whom the gates of hell, are not able to preuaile. Who so shall constantly cleaue vnto him, according to the example of Abraham, shall proue at the length, that they shall haue the ouerhand of the worlde and the Deuill. And shall see them throwne vnder their fæte, which now so greedily gape after their liues. For they ouercome in all things by him, who hath loued them, and hath giuen his sonne for vs, so that wpyth Paule they are able to say: If God be with vs, who can be against vs: who shall be able to seperate vs from the loue of God?

Steuens goeth forth with his hystorie begunne, and rehearseth the Dra- cle of the bondage of the people of Israell in Egypt, which is declared in Genesis. 15. chap. And albeit he putpse hereafter also to speake thereof, yet thought he here to make mention of the same, least any man might thinke it came to passe, at all aduentures, and without the appointment of God. And thys place must be referred to that ende, wherevnto all the things be- fore be referred. For herein appeared the fayth of Abraham, that he quay- led not at this heauie newes and prophetic: and it also teacheth vs, that there was a Church sometime in Egypt, which God acknowledged for hys people, and which of his singuler benefite, he set at libertie, when they neyther had temple nor ceremonies leuiticall. Whereupon any man may gather, that the grace of God and our saluation, is not bounde to outward sacraments, but dependeth vpon the mere fauour of God, which can none other wayes be taken holde of, but by true fayth. For this was playne, that the deliuerie out of Egypt, was a signe of the saluation to come. And if the seruitude or bondage of the body could not be put away, but by the mighty hande

hande of God, who saeth not, that mans merites and power can nothing auayle, in putt ing away the seruitude of the soule, without the helpe and grace of God: These things are to be applyed also to our enformation, because they set out to vs, the condition and state of Gods Church, to be beholden, as in a Glasse.

First it is to be considered, howe in speaking of the seede of Abraham, to whome the inheritaunce of the lande of Chanaan was promised, he sayth: It shall be a sojourner in a straunge land, and they shall euill intreate them fower hundred yeares long. These things teache vs what case the saythfull be in, vpon the earth. For that they be the verie seede or children of Abraham, both Christ and Paule testifieth. To these is promised the inheritaunce of the heavenly kingdome, as Christ beareth witnesse, saying, Feare not little flock: for it hath pleased the father to giue you a kingdome. Agayne: father, I will that where I am, these be also with me. And agayne: In my fathers house are many dwellings. I go to prepare you a place. And I wyll come agayne, and take you vnto my selfe, that where I am, there may you be also. Wherevnto Paule saith to haue alluded, where he sayth: Our fellowship or conuersation is in heauen, from whence we looke for Christ our Sauour. And although we be inheritous of the heavenly countrie, yet it appeareth not to the worlde that we shal so be, but in the meane season we be Pilgrimes in a straunge land, that is to say, in thys worlde, and haue nothing of our owne. And that this lyfe of oures is lyke to a pilgrimage, we are taught not onely by the oracles of scripture, but also by daylie experience, for as much as we come naked into this worlde, and depart hence naked. And we be not only Pilgrimes, but also manye wayes afflicted by the children of this worlde, which challenge to themselues the rule and dominion of this worlde, so that the Prophet doth not without a cause compare the Church vnto a stone, to the rearing bp whereof, all people exercise their force and strength. And Chronicles teach vs that euen since the beginning of the worlde, as many as haue giuen themselues to God by true faith, haue bene in daunger of persecution, which things we must beare in minde, that we be not offended wyth things that come to passe in our dayes as straunge and vnbwonted. Thys must we holde, as vndoubted true, that nothing happeneth to vs, by hazarde or chaunce, but according to Gods prouydence and ordynaunce, which gouerneth all things rightfully. Neyther could thys worlde, or Satan the prince thereof doe any thing against vs, but through Gods permission and sufferance. And he permitteth or suffreth him not as one that reioyareth in our calamities, or mourning, as Tyranes be, but because he saeth it good that the naturall corruption, growing and cleauing vnto vs, should thys waye be bydeled and punished, whereby it cometh to passe, that somewhyle we stande amazed at the consyderation of ryches; somewhyle at the pompe of honours and dignitie, somewhyle with the desyre of carnall pleasures and concupiscence, or else decline and swerue from the waye of saluation. Then therefore it is needefull, to haue thys noysome stupiditie shaken of, and the desyres of the fleshe to be quenched, with the crosse and tribulations, that we may learne to hate this worlde, and to be enflamed with the ardent loue of the heavenly Chanaan. And let vs promise our selfe no better state in thys life, because the worlde that can not abyde the truth, will allwaye be one, and our corrupt fleshe, howsoeuer it be corrected, wyll vpon euerye

The Church
is as a Pilgrime
in this
worlde, and
afflicted.

Iohn. 7.

Rom. 9.

Luc. 12.

Iohn. 17.

Iohn. 14.

Phil. 3.

1. Tim. 6.

Zach. 12.

1. Pet. 4.

The Church
is defended
by God.

Psal. 94.

Zach. 2.

The ten per-
secutions in
the Church.

i.

Cornelius Ta-
citus in his
xv. booke.

The Ro-
maine Legi-
ons brought
into subiec-
tion.

ii.

iii.

iiii.

v.

vi.

light occasion, fall to his olde blage.

Yet this in the meane season ought greatly to comfort vs, that God here addeth: The nation whome they shall serue, I will iudge. For God is iudge of all the worlde, and will not fayle of his office, although he seme sometime, neyther to see nor heare the fierce and cruell attemptes of the wicked, nor the afflictions of the Godly. For howe should he not see, that hath made the eye, and howe should he not heare, that hath made the eare? For he beholdeth not the Theatre or stage of this worlde, after the maner of ydle gazers, but vieweth and considereth all things in the worlde, as a iuste Judge. And bycause nothing is more deere vnto him, than the church, which he hath redeemed with the blood of his sonne, therefore he letteth no man goe unpunished that doth molest or afflict him: yea, they are iudged to touch the apple of his eye, that ouer boldly touch any of the faythfull Ministers of God. There appere horrible examples of Gods iudgements against such persons: amongst which, this that he shewed againste the Egyptians, as he here threatened, is first to be numbred. The Assirians felt euen the same, which were grievously punished for their tyranny against the people of God. Neyther did Antiochus long scape quyte, for his cruelty against them. What was shewed vpon Herode, is more apparaunt than needeth long rehearse. And if a man consider the thinges that followed after Christes incarnation, he shall see none that euer persecuted the Church, escape the horrible hande of Goddes iustice. The first in this number was Nero, who perceyuing that the people of Rome toke in euill parte the firing of the Citie, whereof he was authour, accused the Christians of that heynous mischiefe, and vsed all kind of punishment against them, as Cornelius Tacitus reporteth. And God suffered the rage of the most cruell tyrant so farre to burst, that they say he also shed the blood of Paule and Peter the Apostles. But shortly after, God reuenged the blood of his Apostles with an horrible iudgement. For there ensued a pestilence, that consumed more than thirtie thousande of his people. After the pestilence the Romaine armie was ouerthrowne in Britaine, and certaine prouinces in Armenia fell from them, and the Romaine Legions were constrained in shamefull wyse to yelde to their enemies. And at length the vengeance of God caught the tirant himselfe, who being iudged by the Senators to be an enemy to his Countrie, first sought to saue himselfe, by dishonest and shamefull flight, and at length, being disappointed of his hope, killed himselfe. Domitian following and treading in the steps of Nero, felt Gods iustice also, being murdered by his owne men. Traiane although he called in the cruell proclamations, set out against the Christians, yet tasted he of Gods wrath. For his golden house at Rome was burned, horrible famine and pestilence horribly reygned in his dayes, and a number of Townes in Asia, Galatia, and Gracia were ouerthrowne and swonne wyth earthquakes. The fourth Emperour after Nero that rose agaynst the Church, was M. Antonius Verus, not long after whome, rose the Germanes, and such a plague followed therevpon, that certaine townes in Italy with the infection thereof, were quyte left destitute of any dwellers. The fifth persecution Lucius Septimius Seuerus beganne, who was both greatly bered with ciuill warres, & being yong of yeres dyed in England not farre from York. With whose examples because Iulius Maximinus was

little

little moued, but boldly raged agaynst the Church: it came to passe by þe iudgement of God, that he and his sonne were torne in pierces by their sondiours, all men crying; that one whelpe ought not to remayne of so vngacious a Syze. And Decius had a death not much vnylike, for after he had shedde the bloude of Christes martyrs, he and his sonne died in a barbarous Countrey, where their bodies coulde not be founde when they were sought to be buried. What shall we say of Licinius Valerianus the eyght persecutor of the Christians, who being taken by Sapor king of the Persians, was constrained to laye his backe on the grounde like a blocke, for Sapor to get on horsebacke by. Valerius Aurelianus which woulde be the ninth in this number, being first feared by a thunderbolt falling at his fete, and not repenting him afterward of his tyrannie, was slayne of his owne men. And when after all these, with greater adoe, Dioclesian, with Maximiniane, and Galerius Maximinus coparteners, armed themselues agaynst Christes Church, they evidently felt the hande of God reuenging the same. For we reade that many thousands of men were consumed with earthquakes. Dioclesian and Maximinian of their owne accorde in one day resigned and gane by the Emperre, eyther for sorowe that they sawe they coulde not bring to passe that they attempted, or else for feare of Constantine. And Dioclesian afterwarde, hearing that Constantine had killed and overcome Maxentius, slew himselfe. But Maximinian desirous to haue his Emperre againe, being expelled by Maxentius, fledde to Constantine his sonne in lawe, whom he laye in wayte to haue killed. But his daughter preferring hir husbands lyfe before hir fathers, disclosed the treason, and so he was killed at Massilia. And this was the ende of two most cruell tyrants, which whole tenne yeares had cruelly afflicted the Church. Galerius being overcome with the grying panges of an incurable disease, called in, the bloody proclamations which he had sent out agaynst the Christians. And all these things came to passe within the space of thre hundred yeares, vnto the reygne of Constantine the great. And the Lord from this time yet was not in rest. For when Iulian the Apostata, both by open force, and also by craft and subtiltie, had vndermined the Church, being overthrowne in the fielde, and wounded with a Iaueling, he cryed out, Thou hast overcome o Galileyan, thou hast overcome. For so had he vsed to call Christ in contempt. Infinite others myght be reckoned beside these, if it were needefull. But there want not later and freshe examples, whereby God hath in our age shewed the seueritie of his iudgement agaynst the persecutors of his Church. This therfore shall stande fast for euer, that God will by his iudgement, take vengeance on them, which enterpryse to bere his people by tyranny at any time. These things ought to serue both for our comfort and instruction. Let it comfort vs, that we heare God is a reuenger of his Church, that we thinke he neglect vs not, when we be afflicted. We are also taught to laye aside the raging desire of priuate reuenge, and to commende all the iudgement of our enemies vnto God, who sayth: Vengeance is mine, I will recompence. The same doctrine may also be stretched further, that we seeke not by any means violently to oppresse any man, knowing that God reuengeth the iniurie that is done to the weaker sort. For Christ sayth: with what measure you meate, with the same shall other measure to you agayne. And the Prophete cryeth: woe to thee that destroyest, for thou shalt be destroyed. Agayne: woe

vii.

viii.

ix.

x.

Histor. Trip.
lib. 6. cap. 47

Deut. 32.

Math. 7.
Esay. 33.

be

Abacuc. 2.

The deliue-
red serue
God.

Psalme. 50.

Iohn. 5.

be to him that buildeth the Citie with bloude: wo be to him that heapeth vp o-
ther mennes goodes. Wherevnto are to be referred the things which God
in his laboe threateneth to the oppressours of wyddowes, of fatherlesse and
straungers. See Exod. 22. In the consideration whereof woulde God they
were moze occupied, that thynke now a dayes the greatest commenda-
tion of manhooe, and safetie of a common weale, standeth in waged
warrefaring.

But it is not to be negligently ouerpasse, howe God speaking of the
ende of their deliuey, sayth: And after that, they shall come foorth and serue
me in this place. This is a generall precept, that they whome God hath
delyuered, must serue hym: whereof we are also admonished. Thys
must specially be considered in our saluation. We are deliuered out of the
tyrannie of the deuill, and from the horrible bondage of sinne, by the singu-
lar benefite of God, who hath boughsafed to giue his sonne for vs. Let vs
therefoze come forth of Egypt, and casting away the desires of this wicked
worlde, let vs serue God in holynesse, puritie, innocencie, sayth, and lone
vnfeyned: touching which thinges, see what is sayde euerywhere in the
writings of the Apostles, Rom. 6. Tit. 2. & 3. 1. Thes. 4. & c. The same must
they doe that are deliuered out of any other distresses. They that are reco-
uered of sicknesses, let them thinke that spoken vnto them that Christ sayth
to the man healed of the pallsie: See thou sinne no more, least a woorse thing
come vnto thee. Let them thinke likewise, that are deliuered from pouer-
tie, hunger, pestilence, warres, or whatsoeuer like calamities. In times
past, the sacrifices, called *συνήγια*, which God ordeyned to be offered to him
for benefites receyued, admonished vs hereof, which also were vsed of the
Gentyles, although they were straungers from the true worship of God.
And to this ende did Christ institute his mysticall supper, which the aunci-
ent fathers called Eucharistiam, that is to say, a giuing of thanks, bicause
they knewe it was ordeyned in the remembraunce of Christes death. And
their wickednesse is very worthy to be condemned, which glorying in the
benefite of redemption, and feeling euery day the vengeaunce of God, yet
will not serue him, but giue themselues wholly to serue sinne, and the de-
uill. Let that principally sticke in our remembrance, that Steuen bzgeth so
instantly, that is, howe we be deliuered from the tyrannie of Satan and
sinne, by the benefite of Gods grace only, and that therein nothing is to
be attributed to our workes, and other colde ceremonies. Let vs therefore
by fayth embrace this benefite, and serue God our Sauour in spirite and
truth, that with him we maye hereafter enioye the blisse of the heauenly
Chanaan, through Jesus Christ our Lord: to whom be prayse, honoz, po-
wer, and glozy for euer. Amen.

The.xlv. Homelie.

And he gaue him the couenaunt of Circumcision. And he begatte Isaac, and
circumcised him the eyght daye. And Isaac begat Iacob, and Iacob the twelue
Patriarches. And the Patriarches hauing enioy at Ioseph, solde him into Ae-
gypt. And God was with him, and deliuered him out of al his aduersities, and
gaue him fauour and wisdom in the sight of Pharao king of Aegypt, and
he made him ruler ouer Aegypt, and all his housholde.

The



The godly Martyr Steven Was accused of impietie agaynst God, the lawe, the holy place, and all the lawes ceremoniall. His aduersaries tooke occasion to accuse him, for that he taught me that these outward thinges were abrogated by Christ, and that they could not be iustified by them, but that iustification and saluation came by fayth onely in Iesus Christ, and that the ceremonies serued for none other vse, but to signifie the way of saluation which is conteyned in Christ, and to bring men vnto him. Wherefore, it behoued him to vse a kinde of earnest and graue defence before them, which stode altogither vpon ceremonies. He so handleth therefore and frameth his defence, that he proueth by the matter it selfe, he is clære from all impietie. For he diligently rehearseth whatsoeuer God did to the fathers in time passed, partly to declare that he acknowledged and kept the auncient beliefe of the fathers, and partly for that the Jewes shoulde vnderstande howe the fathers in time past were iustified by faith only, without any ceremonies. Wherevpon every man may easily gather, that there is no cause or let why men now a dayes also shoulde not be saued without the ceremonies of the Leuiticall lawe by fayth in Christ, and that therfore they are not to be accused of impietie, which holde and affirme that they are abrogated. And beginning with Abraham, he diligently setteth out his fayth, in following the mercifull calling of God, without anye his desertes before going, to thende he might stirre by the Jewes to follow his steppes. But bicause the holy martyr of Christ was not ignoraunt, that the Jewes did principally glorie in their Circumcision, and in the fathers, agaynst the grace of God giuen them in Christ, he continueth on in his Oracion begunne, bicause he woulde wyper them cleane from both these glorynges.

Of circumcision he brievely intreateth saying: And he gaue him the couenaunt of circumcision, and he begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eyght day. He confesseth that circumcision was instituted of God, but whyle he ioyneth it with the things going before, he thereby putteth it away, in that he sheweth it was giuen vnto Abraham, after all those things which hitherto had bene recyted. For after he was called out of Chaldea, and had declared his beliefe openly by many and notable signes, and was by his faith and beliefe iustified: God gaue him the testament of circumcision, that is to say, he made a Couenaunt with him, which was sealed as it were, and confirmed with circumcision. Wherevpon it followeth, that he was not iustified by circumcision, but that his circumcision was a seale of the righteousness, which he had already gotten by fayth. Which argument Paule also vsed in his fourth chapter to the Romaines. And as Abraham receyved the institution of circumcision simply and plainly, as the Lord did appoynt it, so he plainly obserued, and commended the same to his posteritie. For he circumcised Isaac the eyght day, according to Gods institution, without adding of any other superstitious rite, which thing none that is godly doubteth, but that Isaac also did to Iacob his sonne, and he agayne to hys twelue childzen, which were the Patriarches of the people of Israel. And the holy Ghost would haue fewe things, now almost remembred, touching thys matter,

He beatech
downe the af-
fraunce in
circumcision.

Genclis. 17.

Of Sacra-
mentes, and
sacramentall
kindes of
speech.Deut. 10.
Iere. 4.
Iere. 31.

matter, that it might thereby appeare, howe the holy father s slacke not in these outwarde things, but rather had a regarde vnto Gods testament and couenaunt wherein was contayned the promise of saluation, than to the outwarde ceremonie. The things, we reade in the. xliij. of Genesis make for the better vnderstanding hereof. In the meane season, Steuen plainely reprehendeth the preposterous religion of the Iewes, which gloried so much in their circumcision, and were touched with no consideration of that healthfull couenaunt, that was sealed, and ratified by the merite of Christ.

And this place teacheth vs also to iudge of sacraments, and sacramentall loquutions, whereof certaine superstitious and contentious persons, take occasion now a dayes, of continuall quarrelling, so far much as they still bge the letter, and seeke for no deeper vnderstanding of the mysterie. Steuen sayth, that Abraham receyued the couenaunt of circumcision, and he sayth it not of his owne heade, but in respect of Gods worde, which once sayde vnto Abraham: This is my couenaunt, which you shal obserue betweene me and you, and your seede after you. Let euerye manchild among you be circumcised. &c. Which wordes, if we vnderstande, according to the letter, then shall circumcision it selfe, be called the couenaunt, and vndoubtedly this thing deceyued manye in times past, who thought they had serued God througely, when they were circumcised. But the thing it selfe declareth, it ought otherwise to be vnderstanded. For first God requyred by his lawe and Prophetes, the circumcision of the heart. Then in Ieremie he sayth, that they which were circumcised, abode not in his couenaunt. Beside this, Abraham before he was circumcised, had obteyned the thinges, which God promysed in his couenaunt. For before thys, he obeyed God, when he called him: before this, he receyued the promises by fayth and beliefe: before this, had God imputed his beliefe vnto him for righteousnesse, and therefore he was grafted into Christ, without whome neyther righteousnesse, nor saluation can come vnto man. Therefore circumcision is called the couenaunt, by reason of the propozition and agreement, that is betwene the signes, and the things signified in the sacraments, and bicause God testifyeth by this seale, that he acknowledge them for his confederates and heyres that truly fulfill and keepe the articles of his couenaunt. And as by circumcision they were receyued into the societie of Gods people: so the same confirmed their fayth in temptations, which fayth God would haue vnder set, and as it were shored bp, with outwarde proppes, bicause of the fleshes frailtie. The lyke or same reason, was of the sacrifices, which were wont in the lawe to be called sinnes, and expiation or clensing of sinnes. But if a man would here bge or strayne the letter, he should heare the Apostle speak against it, saying. The bloud of Oxen, & Gotes can not take away sinne. And we knowe that God by his Prophetes, reiecteth them as wicked and vncleane persons, which daylie gaue him offerings, and spared no cost nor labour. Shall we thinke therefore that God mocked his people, commending sacrifices by so goodly names? No. But there was a certayne and true meaning of them, that they signified Christ that true Lambe of God, which taketh awaye the sinnes of the worlde, in whome whosoever then trusted vnfaignedly, he was for his sake delpyered from all his sinnes. And when any bled to doe sacrifice, wanting this fayth, God had no more

regarde

regarde to their sacrifices, than if they had offered a Dogge or an Hogge, as in Elay he testifieth. And if we come to the sacraments of the new testament, we shall finde the lyke reason in them also. For the Apostle calleth baptism, the Lauet of newnesse or regeneration. But (alas) how many shall we finde, which after they are baptized, shewe any tokens of a body renewed or regenerated? And yet the holpe ghost, commendeth not baptism with false praises, but hath respect to the vse thereof: namely, bicause according to Gods institution, it effectually and truely sealeth in the elect, the innocation and regeneration, whereof Christ himselfe is the Author. So in the mysticall supper, the breade is called the body of Christ, and the wine his bloude. Wherevpon many gather, that the true body and bloude of Christ, is eaten and drunken reallye and substantially, as well of the good, as of the badde. But we make Christ the Judge of this controuersie, and reason after thys sort vpon the selfesame wordes. Whosoeuer eateth the fleshe of Christ, and drinketh his bloude, dwelleth in Christ, and Christ in him: But many that eate of the breade of the supper, and drinke of the Cup, neyther dwell in Christ, nor haue Christ dwelling in them: Ergo, the body and bloud of Christ are not receyued really and substantially in the mysticall bread and wine, nor bounde vnto these outwarde signes. No man can denie, but the Maior is of Chrisses making. And daylie experience proueth the Minor: and would God it were not proued by the examples of them, which herein sufficiently shewe, howe farre they be from Christ, in that they bring an horrible schisme and diuision into the Church by their contention, & cruelly persecute the true worshippers of Iesus Christ. Who seeth not therefore, that the wordes of the supper are to be vnderstanded sacramentally: yea, as the sacrifices in the olde tyme profited none but them, which were endued wyth true fayth, and brought Christ vnto them: euen so by the supper shall we receyue no fruite, except we bring him by true fayth with vs, and hauing our mindes lift vp aboue the heauens, fede on him by fayth: Which fayth whosoener wanteth, are farre from Christ, & prophane and vnhallo w the supper by their hypocrisie, and therefore eate and drinke vnto themselves damnation. These thinges for this ende we must consyder, that we may learne it is a pernicious error, to be tyed and addicted vnto outwarde ceremonies, and to seeke in them, that that belongeth onely vnto Christ, and thzough fayth onely is to be founde in him. So therefore must we vse the sacraments, that first we must acknowledge Gods goodnesse, which doth bouchsafe to confirme our fayth by outward signes and ceremonies. Then when we are moued to vse and receyue them, we must reare vp our minds to the thinges signified by them, and chiefly we must perfourme those thinges which God prescribeth to vs by them. Herevnto serueth Augustines rule, which in his bookes of christian doctrine, is vttered in these wordes: The Lorde himselfe, and the Apostolike doctrine hath delyuered vnto vs, a certaine fewe of Sacraments, in steade of many, the same being verye easie to be done, verie singuler and excellent in meaning, and most pure and cleane in obseruation: such as is the Sacrament of baptism, and the celebration of the bodye and bloude of the Lorde. The things that euery man receyueth, he being instructed or inspired, knoweth wherevnto they are to be referred: that he may reuerence them, not with carnall seruitude, but rather with spirituall libertie, for as to follow the letter, and to take the signes, for the thinges which are signified

Third booke
and. ix. chap.

by them, is a token of seruyll weaknesse and infirmitie: so to interpretate and expounde the signes vnprofitably, is a token of wandring errour &c. And surely it is a miserable seruitude of the minde, to cleaue vnto outwarde thinges, and not to be able to lyfte vp our senses into heauen, that we maye enioye Christ sitting on the right hande of the father aboue.

Nowe, if the ceremonies instituted of God, can neyther iustifie, nor saue vs, yea, to vse them it is hurtfull, if they be done without fayth: how much more detestable is the errour of them, which will attribute to mans constitutions, and to the wearishe and colde ceremonies, that the bolde curiositie of brayne hath deuised, the glorie of iustification and saluation: For as the Lorde once vniuersally condemned all the traditions of men, so it is as cleere as the Sunne, that these ceremonies can not be ministred with fayth, bicause fayth can rest vpon none other foundation, than the worde of God, as Paule teacheth. Therefore this onely Canone ouerthroweth all Poperie, which with all the rytes and ceremonies therof, is so mainteyned with the foolish decrees of superstitious men, that it needeth no further demonstration.

Steuen prosecuteh his narration begonne, and beateth downe the vaine affyaunce in the fathers, in whome they marueylously gloried, as we tofore haue declared. And to proue that the fathers were iustified, neyther by circumcision, nor euer a whyt the better therfore, nor yet merited saluation by anye workes, but were saued through the mere and vnspeakeable goodnesse and fauour of God, he rehearseth the straunge & vnnatural dede, that they did against Ioseph their brother, which he toucheth in fewe wordes, but such, that it may easily appeare, how heynous a dede it was. For thus he sayth: The Patriarches hauing indignation, solde Ioseph into Aegypt. The storie is in Moses, Gene. 37. chap. First, he sheweth the spring of this fact to be enuie, wherein they boyled, against their innocent brother, for none other cause, but for that they vnderstoode God had appointed for him great honors and dignities. They were in the lyke fault that Caine once was in. For he slew his brother Abel, blynded with the affection of enuie and hatred. For although the Patriarches shed not his bloude, yet were they guilty of murther, both bycause of their pretenced malice of mynde, the fulfilling wherof God stopped by meanes of Ruben, and also for that they solde their brother, to alyantes, which was a thing that God afterwarde, appointed to be punished with death. Adde vnto this, a number of other things concurring, in the doing of this dede, and it shall appeare, that by this one fact, they had deserved, to be cast of for euer: and therefore, that it was not to be ascribed to their righteousnesse, but to Gods goodnesse, that he did vouchsafe to make the nation that came of them, his owne people and inheritaunce. For they vpon a bolde and rashe impietie and vngodlynesse, tooke vpon them to contende wyth God, whose deuise by thys meane they thought to stop and hinder. They were also vnkinde towarde their father, who they knewe well, had a great delight in Ioseph, and whose olde age they should rather haue comforted, than haue made sadde. Of theyr vngodlynesse towarde their brother, what needeth it to speake, whom (as much as in them laye) they went about not onely to kyll in bodie, but also in soule, whyles they sell him to Ismaelites into Egypt, miserably to serue among such, as they knewe had no knowledge of God, nor his wyll. What

punish-

Ifay. 29.
Math. 15.
Roma. 10.

He beateth
downe theyr
affyaunce in
the fathers.

Gene. 17.

Gene. 4.

Exodus. 21.

punishmentes therfore, what Helles were sufficient, to reuenge suche a deede, if God would haue shewed his rigour rather than his goodnesse and mercie :

This place also serueth for our information, & teacheth vs that it is a vaine thing to vaunt or glorie in the vertue of our auncestors. Not that we deny it is a singuler gift of God, if any man happen to haue famous and excellent progenitors, but we say we haue them not to thend to brag of them in Gods sight. For though our forefathers were neuer so good, yet had they that goodnesse of the fauour of God, and to vs cometh no profite by their vertue, vnlesse we endeour to follow it, which thing is at large set forth in Ezechiel the.xliij. Chapter. And it is manifest, that God neuer sharplier threatned the Jewes, than when they begonne to bragge of Abrahams vertue. For then Iohn calleth them Adders broode, and Christ, the children of the Deuill. And that that Steven noted in the Jewes, the same is most euident to be seene in all Nations, as well particularly as generally, For although there be some of their forefathers, which by reason of their vertues, and good deedes deserued some prayse amongst men: yet there want not diuers others, whose vngaciousnesse deserued not onely the destruction of the whole Nation, but also eternall damnation, and forsaking of the whole posteritie, vnlesse God of his peculiar and fauourable sparing, woulde haue them saued. Let vs all therfore humble our selues in the sight of God, and let him that reioycest, reioyce in the Lorde, who is mercifull, louing, patient, and of great goodnesse, who dealeth not with vs after our sinnes, nor rewardeth vs according to our wickednesse. See the Psalme.103.

And because Steven is entred into the historie of Ioseph, whose chastitie, wisdom, righteousness, and godlynesse myght seme to deserue to bring him to promotion and dignitie, and that for his sake all the Nation of the Jewes was honoured and benefited, he aunswereth this error also, and sheweth that euen Ioseph also receyued whatsoeuer he had, of Gods fauour, and not of his owne desert and merite. God (sayth he) was with him, and deliuered him out of all his troubles. Where Ioseph therfore suffered aduersitie patiently, that he was not ouercome with the whorish entisements of his dishonest mistresse, that he kept his fayth and trust to his maister vnblemished, that he despayred not in the miserie of prison and captiuitie, all this was the benefite of God, which woulde not leaue him destitute of his grace. By his grace it came also to passe, that he being instructed with the spirite of prophecie, coulde giue the king wholesome counsell, and get hys fauour. Wherefore it is to be attributed neyther to Iosephes witte, neyther to Pharaos clemencie, but to Gods goodnesse, that Ioseph came to be gouernor of all Egypt. Adde herevnto howe God woulde haue all these things come to passe in a prophane Countrie, when the people of God had yet no temple builded, nor ceremonies of the lawe as yet appoynted. Wherevpon agayne we gather, that the ceremonies which long after ensued, were not deliuered to iustifie by, but to shadowe to vs the true meane of iustification and saluation, which was giuen by promise in the beginning of the worlde, and was to be fulfilled by Christe, in the time thereto appoynted. What meane we therfore to contende for those thinges, without the which it is playne the fathers pleased God, and were saued? There remaine in the example of Ioseph certaine other pointes that serue for the information and

Ab.ij.

teaching

The glorie is
vayne that is
sought in the
vertue of au-
cestres.

Math. 3.
Iohn. 8.

Ioseph also
is of fauour
saued.

God ardeeth
his people
when they be
afflicted.

Pfal. 34.

Pfal. 27.

Iohn. 16.

Iohn. 14.
Math. 28.

Pfal. 56.

Whatsoever
we haue that
is good, is of
Gods gift.

1. Cor. 2.

Genes. 8.

1. Cor. 4.

Ioseph is a
figure of
Christ.

teaching of euery man, whereof we haue yet farther to speake.

The first is, that he sayth God was with Ioseph. Then neyther the falschoode of his brethren, nor the shamefull slander of his mistresse, nor the rather vnrighteousnesse of Putiphare, could depriue Ioseph a faythfull worshipping of God, of his helpe. And that that came to passe in him, falleth out in all those that be godly. For the eyes of the Lord are ouer the righteous, and his eares are open vnto their prayers. And we maye also saye with Dauid: when my father and mother forsake me, the Lorde taketh mee vppe. For as Christ sayde, he was not alone, though all his Disciples forsooke him: so can not they be alone, that are grafted in Christ by fayth, forasmuch as to them belong the promises of Christ, such as are: I will not leaue you comfortlesse, I am with you euen vnto the ende of the worlde. In the meane whyle lette vs marke, that Ioseph was tossed with diuers calamities, although he was vpholden by the present helpe of God. For he is solde by his brethren, he is tempted by his mystrisse, he is in daunger of his lyfe by meane of hir accusation. He is a long while kept in prison. Let no man therefore thinke that God is with him, but onely when he is in safetie and at libertie. Let no man also vpon presumption of Gods helpe, promise himselfe all kinde of rest and securitie of flesh. But let vs vnderstande that God doth not so defende and deliuer vs, but that sometimes we must beare the crosse, and yet that we be neuer more vnder Gods protection, than when we be most tried by afflictions. For then he telleth our fleetings, and our teares are gathered together as into a bottell.

Next, let vs note, howe Ioseph had wisdom and fauour giuen him. Ergo whatsoever good or excellent thing we haue, it is the gift of God. And it is his benefite, if we be able so profitably to vse the giftes that be in vs, that others accept or fauour vs the more for the same. For if we consider the nature of man, all things are corrupt in him. Our negligence perceyue not the things belonging to the spirite. Our will followeth but earthly things, and is ruled after the desires of the fleshe, whose imaginations are euill euen from our youth. We haue no strength to doe good. Except therefore the Lorde regenerate vs, and endue vs with his spirite, there will be nothing sounde or whole. Agayne, except he cause vs and our doyngs to please others, we shall nothing preuaile. For what shall he be able to doe with others that is not able to teach and gouerne himselfe? As therefore it was Gods gift, that Iosephes counsell was well accepted with Pharaos: so except God inclyne the hearts of men to lyke vs, all our doyngs shall be vnprofitable and bayne. Which thing Paule well marked in the ministerie of the worde, when he sayde: hee is nothing that watereth, neyther hee that planteth, but God that giues the encrease. The consideration hereof maketh vs not to be proude of Gods giftes, and to vse them as we ought to doe. For what hast thou that thou hast not receyued? And if thou hast receyued it, why gloryest thou as though thou hadst not receyued it? And if thou hast receyued it, surely thou shalt hereafter giue an account, of that thou hast receyued and layde out, as Christ hath taught vs in the Parable of the Talentes. Math. 25.

Last of all, it shall not be vnprofitable, if we consider the figure of Christ which Ioseph purporteth, forasmuch as the ende and marke of all Stevens oration was, to bring the Jewes vnto Christ. For as the brethren would not

not acknowledge Ioseph for their Lorde and king: so when Christ came among his owne, his owne woulde not bouchsafe to receyue him. As Ioseph was solde by his brethren: so Christ was solde by Iudas, and afterwarde was deliuered vnto the Gentyles by the Iewes, which after the fleshe were his brethren. As Ioseph suffered many thinges with the Baker and Cupbearer, whereof the one was put to death, the other was saued, so we reade Christ suffered in the middle of two thæues, whereof the one through the grace of God was saued, the other damned. As Ioseph came vnto honoz by manye daungers and horrible aduersities: so Christ by the bitter and horrible death of the Crosse, entred into the glozve of the father, and hath obteyned a name which is aboue all names, whereat euery knee ought to bowe and obeye. I omit diuers other thinges, which in their time and place may be more commodiously intreated. It is our partes wyth true faith to embrace Iesus Christ, whose figure Ioseph bare, and through the manifolde perils and hazardes of this lyfe, to aspyre to the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen. Which is prepared from euerlasting, for them that beleue, and purchased with the precious bloude of Christ: to whome be prayse, honoz, power and glozve for euer. Amen.

Iohn.1.

Phil.2.

The.xlvj.Homelie.

T H E R E came a dearth ouer all the lande of Aegypt and Chanaan, and great affliction, that our fathers found no sustenance. But when Iacob heard that there was corne in Aegypt, he sent our fathers first. And at the seconde tyme, Ioseph was knowne of his brethren, and Iosephs kynred was made knowne vnto Pharaon. Then sent Ioseph a message, and caused his father to be brought and all his kinne, lxxv. soules. And Iacob descended into Aegypt, and dyed both he and our fathers, and were caried ouer into Sichem, & layde in the Sepulchre that Abraham bought for money of the sonnes of Hemor, the sonne of Sichem.



Ihe godly Martyr Steuen goeth on in hys discourse of the thinges, done in olde tyme, touching the fathers, the chiefe ende wherof is to proue, that he firmly holdeth the auncient religion of the fathers, who (as it is playne) without Temple and ceremonies pleased God, and were saued. Wherof he gathereth, that the temple now also is not necessarie, but that the people should haue respect rather, to hym that was prefigured thereby. And among other things, he treateth the hystorie of Ioseph diligently, because he (as I sayde in the last Sermon) was a figure of Iesus Christ. And in the same hystorie, he noteth chiefly, howe Ioseph was solde into Egypt, and howe there through the fauour of God, he was not onely preserued, but also made Gouvernour of Egypt. After this is declared, the going downe of the whole people of Israell into Egypt, wherof Ioseph hymselfe, is the occasion and authoz. And thys part of the discourse is to be applyed to the same ende, wher vnto we sayde, the things gone before, were to be referred. For Steuens meaning is, to teache them that true religion, and the way of mans saluation did so little depend vpon that

that worſhip which Moyses appoynted, and was for manye yeares obserued in the lande of Chanaan, that the fathers in tyme past by reason of a great dearth were compelled to come from thence into Egypt, where about a two hundreth and tenne yeares (for so many are reckoned from the children of Israels comming into Egypt, to their goyng out) were accepted for the people of God, although they neyther had Church, nor other ceremonies of the lawe. And that therefore nothing letteth, why they might not at this daye also be saued without a Temple, yea, that it ought to be abrogated with all the ceremonies leuiticall, forasmuche as it was playne, he was already come and exhibited, of whome all such things in tyme passed, were but signes and shadowes. The storie is writen in Genesis. 42. 43. and in other Chapters following: where at large are set forth those things which Steuen toucheth but briefly. But least we lose the commoditie ensuing of the discourse, it behoueth vs to note the chiefe points by themselves, and so to apply them to our instruction. Let vs examine therefore the cause that moued the people to go into Egypt, then their going downe, and last of all, what is sayde of the Patriarches death and buriall.

1. The cause
of the going
unto Egypt.

Gen. 12. 26.

Gen. 15.

The cause that Iacob went downe into Egypt, was a great dearth, wherewith he was troubled in the lande of Chanaan, and which he coulde by no meanes more commodiously auoyde, bicause through Iosephs counsell, Egypt onely had store of corne layde vp, for such vse. Here it is worthy to be well considered, howe God suffereth Iacob a true worſhipper of him, and a verie holie man, to be troubled and molested with famine. Thys might be imputed to his childrens naughtinesse, if we read not how the like had bene seene in Abraham and Isaac. And there are manye examples that teache vs, howe the faythfull and true worſhippers of God, haue bene afflicted also with other aduersities, and calamities. Hereof we gather, that aduersities and afflictions, are not alwayes arguments of Gods wrath, and that we should not dispaire in them, as though we were quyte out of the fauour of God. For eyther God of a fatherly care hereby preuenteth our naughtinesse, and bringeth downe our hauotie courage, least we shoulde grievously offende hym, or else lyke a father correcteth our faultes, and by correction bringeth vs into the waye, or else by thys meane, executeth hys secret iudgementes, not yet perceyued of vs, as in thys present hystorie, we see it commeth to passe. For Iacob with all his familie, is constrained by famine, to come into Egypt, to make away to the Oracle, wherein God had sayde vnto Abraham, that his seede shoulde sojorne in a straunge lande, out of which, after many afflictions, God should bring them agayne. And the daylie effectes of our afflictions, sufficiently teache vs, that God bringeth many things to passe, by his iust and wholsome iudgement, which we before, had no vnderstanding of. But thys hath in it a singuler comfort, that as he would haue Iacob feele the smarte of famine: so he sent Ioseph before into Egypt, and made hym ruler of all the countrie, that by his counsell and prouision, he and all hys familie shoulde be fed. This goodnesse and trust in God, is set forth in the hundreth and fifti Psalme, where it is thus sayde: God called for a dearth vpon the lande, and destroyed all the prouision of breade: But he had sent a man before them, euen Ioseph, which was solde to be a bonde seruaunt. &c By him therefore, had Iacob most succour, in whom he supposed, he had greatest cause of sorrowe. For he had mourned and lamented

mented bitterly for Ioseph, whome he thought was deade, through whose liberalitie he is now notwithstanding mainteyned and cherished. Ioseph acknowledged thys counsell of God, where he comforteth his brethren, being feared with the remembraunce of their wickednesse, saying: that he was sent before into Egypt, by Gods prouydence, for the benefite and publike vtilitie of many. And oftentimes it cometh to passe, that the things that our enemies vniustly and vngently procure agaynst vs, serue to our benefite and commoditie. And yet their wickednesse is not to be excused therefore, because they in their doing, goe not about to fulfill Gods counsell or purpose, but to satisfie their owne unruly lustes, as hath oftentimes already bene declared.

Gene. 45.

Also we haue here to consider both Pharao and Ioseph: for Pharao deserueth no small commendation of wisdom, and kindenesse, in that he maketh Ioseph, whome he saith to be of more wisdom & counsell than his other men, gouernour of hys kingdome, although he knewe he was both a straunger and bonde man: and in that he saw things prospered according to his deuise and counsel, he liberally considereth & rewardeth both him and all his kinsfolke. Of which example men in authoritie may learne, not onely thankfulness, but also howe profitable a thing it is, to put them in office, that worship God truly, because the blessing of God followeth suche, and that which is done vnto them, God taketh as done vnto himselfe. Thys thing Putiphar before that, perceyued well ynough, whome God prospered in all his doings, whyle Ioseph was ruler of hys house, although he little considered the same. The same doth Pharao now finde, where, by Iosephs industrie and wisdom, he perceyueh himselfe greatly enriched, and all Egypt and the nations adioyning preserved and mainteyned. So afterwarde in this booke, for Pauls sake, as manye as sayled in his companye were saued from drowning. And as by the godly, great commoditie vseth to come vnto many: so oftentimes through a fewe that be wicked, if they be of authoritie and power, and may doe what they list, ensueth great inconuenience and mischief. Achan onely through his sacriledge (as close as it was) was the occasion of a publike calamitie. And Ionas flying from Gods sight, endaungereth not only himselfe, but also the Mariners, and as many passengers as were in the shippe. So perillous and hurtfull a thing the company of the wicked is. What maye therefore be hoped for, where such are put in office and authoritie? Surely none other, but that they will be the cause of publike calamitie, and generall destruction. Whereof we haue an example in Manasses, through whose bloudye and cruell wickednesse, it came to passe, that God being greatly offended agaynst the Jewes, lette them be carryed to Babylon, hauing their Citie and Temple first destroyed by fire and sworde. Therefore in chooling of Officers for common weales, and the Church, the chiefe care must be, that they be godly, vnlesse we will haue destroyers reygne ouer vs, rather than benefactors. And surely the onely consideration of this place is sufficient to teache vs what the chiefe cause of the euils in our dayes is, seeing such are euerywhere put in office and authoritie, as are touched with no care of godlynnesse nor religion.

Iosua. 7.

In Ioseph we haue to consider the nature of loue, tempered with the rule of equitie and iustice. for he acknowledged his brethren, who had handled him very naughtily and vncourteously, and giueth them foode most liberally,

The wisdom and thankfulness of Pharao.

Iosephs loue tempered with iustice.

Math. 5.

2. The coming of the children of Israel into Egypt.

Roma. 8.

The Patriarches dyed in Egypt.
Gene. 50.
Exodus. 13.
Iosua. 24.

liberally, but yet he trieth their mindes with a certaine counterfaite a uisitation and sharpnesse of wordes, and would not make himselfe knowne vnto them, till he sawe they repented and were sorie. Herein he followed the propertie of God the father, & of Iesus Christ his sonne, who in times past hauing suffered all kinde of iniuries at our handes, and yet dayly suffreth, cannot yet forget his loue and liberalitie, but acknowledgeth vs for his brethren, and doth good euen to them that haue deserved a thousand deaths and crosses. Let vs imitate this condicion of God the father, if we will be called and taken for his children. Yet is there no cause why their sinnes shoulde not be reprovied and accused, who we see haue done and doe many things out of square. For we may not so pardon them who haue iniuriéd vs, that through our to much bearing they become the worse, but we must thinke this the chiefe poynt of charitie, if we can by anye meane call them from sinne and destruction, which as yet be boyde of godlynesse.

But let vs consider the seconde part of this place, where Iacob and all his familie and kindred cometh downe into Egypt. Here it appereth none remayned in the countrie of Chanaan that were of the number of Goddes people, but they were all outlawes, and preserved there without any ceremonies, or rites of the law, by the mere grace of God. And it is not without a cause that Steuen so diligently reckoneth the number of soules. For the consideration hereof setteth befoze our eyes the ineffable and inuincible power of God, which was able within two hundred and tenne yeares, to make so small a company so innumerable. For as Moyses testifieth, when they went out of Egypt, there were mounstred. vij. hundred thousand & thre, five hundred and fiftie fighting men of the Israelites. With the which thing if we compare the tragicall attempts of Pharaos which euery way went about to destroy and rote out this people, it shall easily appeare, that the promise of God made sometime to Abraham (Genes. 15. & 17.) coulde no wayes be hindered by any power or deuyle of man. This ought to be obserued for the instruction and comfort of vs all, that we feare not the threates and enterprises of the worlde, seeing it appeareth the force thereof agaynst God is altogether vayne. Let vs compare this to Christ and his Church. God promised him a kingdome which he possesseth, and shall for euer possesse, despite of his enemies. He promised also that his Church shoulde be enlarged which thing we see is fulfilled, although one Pharaos alone hath not sought the ouerthrowe thereof. Let euery body marke this in their temptations, that they suffer not their fayth to be ouerthrowne seeing (as Paule sayeth) there is nothing that can separte vs from the loue of God.

In the later part of this diuision Steuen sheweth how the fathers died in Egypt, and were afterwarde caried to Sichem. And Moyses wyrteth plainely of Iacob, that his corpes was caried into Chanaan. And the Scripture lykewise sheweth, that the Israelites, brought Iosephes bones out of Egypt, as he gaue commaundement. Concerning the other Patriarches, although Moyses write nothing, yet it is credible that their bones were also brought by their posteritie, because Steuen affirmeth it so boldly befoze them who he knewe were diligent markers of his wordes. Furthermore, that the writers haue erred in the name of Abraham, it is more plaine than needeth long declaration. See at the least what is written touching this field which Iacob bought of the sonnes of Hemor. Genes. 33. and Iosua. 24. He sayth

sayth the Patriarches dyed in Egypt, for that it may appere, they dyed in that religion, which consisted in no ceremonies, but in the onely fayth, which embraced the promyses of God. Wherof may be gathered, that they were iustified and saued by fayth, through the mere grace of God, and not by the lawe ceremoniall. In the meane season we are taught that the faithfull dye goddly in what place so euer it be, and that they are not to be thought miserable which dye in exyle out of their countrie. For where this life whereforever it is ledde, is but a Pilgrimage, and our countrie or Citie is permanent and abyding in heauen: he cannot dye in banishment, which hanning ended the race of his pilgrimage, is taken into the haue of the heauenly countrie. For the Angell calleth them blessed which die in the Lorde. And Christ testifieth that they which beleue in him passe from death vnto lyfe. Furthermore, God is present euerywhere with his that are ready to die. And in the later daye, the earth, the sea, and all the parts of the world shall render agayne all those that euer they made atwayne and consumed. Therefore, pieuishe and foolishe is the superstition of those, which measure beatitnde or blisse by holynesse of places, and thinke it a great matter in what place a bodye is buried: whereas it is playne, that all the earth is the Lordes, whose power and grace can be included and bounde to no place. And let not these men object to mee the Patriarches, which wylled their bones to be caried out of Egypt into the lande of Chanaan. For they did not that, to thende to shewe they had any hope of saluation in the place of buriall, but this was a worke of fayth, which no feare of death coulde driue from them. And for that they woulde testifie to all menne, that they themselfe beleued the promyses of God which he had made vnto them touching their posteritie to be possessors and inhabitants of the land, and would allure their offsprig to loue the same, therefore they would there be buried: so that euen at the poynt of death it may be sayde, they had an hope and beliefe in the same. And that good cause thus to doe appereth by the conditions and behauiour of their posteritie, who being deliuered out of Egypt by the singular myracles and wonders of God, had yet an eye still vnto the same, and despised the Countrie where their fathers were buried. What woulde they therefore haue done, if their fathers had appoynted their Sepulture in Egypt: Therefore the example of these Patriarches, nothing helpe their superstition, which thinke so great an hope of mannes saluation and glozy in the buriall place. Let vs rather marke the poynt of this diuision, of Steutens whole oration, and leauing the obseruation of ceremonies, let vs keepe fast our hope and fayth, that we may sitte with the holye Patriarches in the kingdome of heauen, as Iesus Christ hath promised vs: to whome be prayse, honor, power, and glozy for euer. Amen.

Apoca. 14.
Iohn. 5.

Apoca. 20.

The .xlvij. Homelie.

B V T when the tyme of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grewe and multiplied in Aegypt, till an other king arose, which knewe not of Ioseph. The same delt subtilly with our kynned, and euyl-intreated our fathers, and made them cast out their yong chyl-dren, that they should not remayne alyue. The same tyme was Moyse

Ex. i.

borne,

borne, and was acceptable vnto God, and nourished vp in his fathers house three Moneths. When he was cast out, Pharaos daughter tooke him vp, and brought him vp for hir owne sonne. And Moses was learned in all maner wisdom of the Aegyptians, and was mightie in deedes and in wordes.



Although God taught our first fathers the fayth and waye of saluation, which is founded on the merite of Iesus Christ onely, and therefore his doctrine onely is most auncient and most true, yet euery where, it is accused of noueltie and falschode. The cause is, that men more regarde such outwarde signes and shewes, as spring of their owne deuyle and brayne, than the worde of God. Therefore it cometh to passe, that whyle they looke onely to these externall things, they take them for authoꝝ of newe opinions, and enimies of Gods religion, which teache the contrarie, and labour to bring agayne the way of saluation, and true religion, that God hath ordeyned and instituted. This thing came to passe in Steuen, who teaching the gospell of Iesus Christ at Ierusalem, and sending the people from the ceremonies of the lawe, vnto Christ, was by and by accused, as one that deadly hated the temple, and true worshipping of God. He excuseth himselfe not in wordes onely, but also in deede. For gathering together an hystorie of the fathers, he declareth that they followed none other waye of fayth and saluation, than that which is in Christ. He bringeth his hystorie from the verie origine and beginning of the nation, vntill the coming of Israell into Egypt, and the death of the Patriarches. Nowe, he beginneth to declare the increasing and deliuerie of the people, wherein he vseth great diligence, bicause the deliuerie out of Egypt, was a figure of the redemption made by Christ, whereby we are also taught, what state the Church hath bene in in all ages of the worlde, and shall be still. Now, the verie same scope and ende, as well of this part, as of the things aboue rehearsed, is to shewe, that the Iewes were deliuered, through no merite of their workes or obseruaunce of the lawe, but through the singuler benefite of Gods fauour and grace, according to his former promises. Whereupon he gathereth, that the meane of true religion and saluation, consisteth not in outwarde ceremonies, but rather in fayth, which taketh holde of the grace and promises of God. But bicause we shall intreate of all these things, in theyꝝ place, at thys present, we will speake of the increasing of the people, and of Moses their deliuerer, both which things Steuen toucheth in the wordes already read.

1. The people were preserved and multiplied in Egypt by the grace and fauour of God.

The multiplication of the people in Egypt, he proueth by two arguments, ought not to be ascribed to anye counsell or industrie of man, but vnto the goodnesse and fauour of God. The first argument, he taketh of the cause efficient: the seconde of the state and condition of the time. As soone (sayth he) as the tyme of promise drew neighe, which God had sworne vnto Abraham, the people grewe and multiplied in Aegypt. But that this promise was of fauour, none will denie, for as much as it was made vnto the Iewes being not yet borne, and is manifest, that Abraham was chosen of more fauour, and called out of Chaldea. Whereby is gathered that this

people

people, was preserved by the grace of God, and grew to such a multitude, as other wheres Moses reporteth.

It is verie worthy the consideration, that the godly Martyr, appoin-
teth a certayne time, to Gods promise, whereof he knewe mention was
made in the worde of God. Where in the fourth generation, Abrahams
posteritie is promised to be deliuered from the yoke of seruitude. The hy-
storie agreeth verie fitly with the promise, where it teacheth that Moses the
Captaine of the people, was the fourth from Iacob. For Iacob begat Leui,
Leui begat Cahad, and of Cahad was borne Amram, who (as it is written)
was Moses and Aarons father. We are taught by thys place, that not only
the effects of things comming to passe among men, but also the causes and
the circumstances are comprised within Gods prouidence of God. For what can
that euermlasting minde neglect, which both numbrieth the heares of our
heade, and hath also most exact knowledge of the flowers of the fiede and
byrdes of the ayre. That he compriseth also all tymes and seasons, Christ
himselke testifieth, where he reprehendeth hys Disciples, because they were
inquisitiue of thinges, such as his father had reserued in hys owne power
onely. The consideration of these thinges, must serue for our consolation,
when we be in great distresse or trouble, and see God so deferre his helpe,
that it might seme, he had both forgotten vs, and his promises. Then let
vs remember, that God hath appoynted a certayne time, when to per-
fourme his promises, which God will neuer let so to ouerpasse, but he will
helpe them that trust in hym. It is our duties, in the meane whyle, to
waite and abyde for the helpe of God, and to appoint hym no time or order
when or howe to doe hys pleasure. Tarie thou the Lordes leysure (sayth Da-
uid) put thy trust in him, and he shall comfort thine heart. Yea, it is sayde in
other places, they haue tempted the Lorde, that haue prescribed him anye
time to shewe his power or will, in suche as were those in the desert, that
durst aske fleshe, and the Nobles of Bethulia, which sayde, they woulde
waite but fīue dayes for the helpe of God. Let vs vse this Tryacle and
Conserue against the impacience and waywardenesse of our fleshe,
and thinke that God bringeth his assayes about, in their certayne times,
and places, and yet in the meane whyle, forsaketh not such as put their
hope in hym.

The other argument is taken of the state of the tymes, wherein the
people was increased. For it would haue seemed no great marueyle, if the
people had multiplied among them, which remembriug Ioseph and hys be-
nefites, would haue cherished them, and done for them, as it appereth the
former kings of Egypt did. But the people of the Jewes grew and mul-
tiplied, euen agaynst the willes of the chiefe rulers, and they stryuing all
they coude, agaynst it. For there arose a newe king, which knewe not Io-
seph, and had no regarde of the benefites before done vnto them. Thys
king not onely neglected the people of Israell, but let all others misse
them, and craftily set vpon them, and made all Egypt to hate them and sus-
pect them, and vsed such crueltie and tyrannie against them, that not con-
tented to bereaue them of libertie alone, and to oppresse them with bon-
dage, he caused their child ren at their birthe time, eyther to be kylled, or
else after they were borne, to be throwne awaye, or else to be sought for by
the ministers of hys crueltie, and other wayes to be made out of the way.

Num.1.

The prou-
dence of God
comprehen-
deth all tymes
Genes.15.

Math.10.6.

Actes.1.

Psal.27.

Num.11.

Psal.78.

Iudith.8.

Abacuc.2.

See Exodus the first chapter. Yet this notwithstanding, the people grew and increased exceedingly, & lyke a palme tree rose vp, despite of the tyranny that oppressed it and kept it downe. Who therfore doth not acknowledge this, to be a certayne singuler worke of Gods goodnesse, and that it ought not to be ascribed to anye ceremonies, seing there are none at thys tyme, as yet appointed?

God mixeth
aduersitie
among prosperitie.

First let vs here consider, howe when the tyme of promise draweth nigh, God rased vp such a king as oppressed his people with tyranny, and so intreated them, that scarce they had any more hope, to be deliuered. Thys is Gods blage of olde, to mixe aduersitie and prosperitie togyther, and then to suffer Tyrannes most to rage, when their destruction draweth nighest. By thys meane, he bleth to trye the fayth of his people, and is verie careful that they by carelesnesse abuse not their liberty. There are euerywhere examplers hereof in Dauid, Ezechiel, and infinite others. Hereto belongeth that that came to passe after the people returned from Babilon, about the restoring againe of the church, when neyther the authoritie of Cyrus could repress the attemptes of their enemies, and Cambyses his sonne following, encouraged the enemies of the church by his supportacion, insomuch that they that wrought vpon the walles of the Citie, were fayne to worke with one hande, and fight with an other. It is for our profite, diligently to consider these things, that we be not to bolde in prosperitie, least we be entangled in securitie, but rather that we consider howe we must triumphe vnder the crosse, and that we therfore must prepare our selues vnto the same, howsoeuer all things seeme to laugh vpon vs.

Nehem. 4.

Small is the
remembraunce
of benefites
receiued with
Princes.

Next we haue to consider, that he sayth a king arose which knew not Ioseph. And if we searche the Chronicles we shall finde it to be scarce fiftie yeares betwene the death of Ioseph, and the raigne of this tyranne. For Ioseph at thirtie yeares of age, was made ruler of Egypt. Then followed the seauen yerres of plentie, and in the seconde yeare of the dearth he sent for his father Iacob to come vnto him. Wherefore, if we allowe them any tyme to prepare for their iourney, and to iourney in, we shall finde that Israel, came into Egypt, not long after Ioseph was fortie yerres of age. Ioseph liued yet after this, thre score and tenne yeares, for Moses sayth he dyed, when he was an hundred and ten yeares olde. Now, the Israelites were in Egypt, two hundred and ten yeares, from which, if we take the thre score and ten yerres of Ioseph, and the foure score yeares, that Moses liued, before he brought out the people, there shall but thre score yeares onely remaine, betwene the death of Ioseph, and the byrth of Moses, from which yet must be taken ten yeares at the least, that Amram liued in matrimonie, in the tyme of persecution, before Moses his sonne was borne. For it is playne that Aaron was borne thre yeares before Moses. And when Moses was founde by the ryuer side, his sister Marie was of that age, that she was able to talke with Pharaos daughter, and to giue hir counsell, howe to saue and bring vp the childe. The consideration of these things teache vs, howe little remembraunce princes of this worlde, haue of good turnes, that men doe vnto them, seing the kings following within so little a space, are ignorant of Ioseph, through whose counsell, Egypt was preserued, and the kings power so greatly increased. For being drunken with prosperitie and good successe, they easily ware proude, and thinke it an heynous matter,

to acknowledge themselves debtors to any man. Therefore Dauid both truly and wisely sayth: Put not your trust in Princes, nor in anye childe of man, for there is no helpe in them. **Agayne:** It is better to trust in the Lorde, than to put any confydence in Princes. We are also taught, howe hurtfull a thing it is, to forget or to be ignorant in the auncient actes, lawes, and priuiledges. For this place plainly testifieth, that this thing was the cause of most cruell tyrannie, and at length of most horrible destruction. Therefore, notable is the custome of the Persians and Medians, whose kings as **Hystorographers** saye, are continually occupied in the reading of the **Chronicles**. For howe much profite ensueth thereof, the onely hystorie of **Mardochayus**, abundantly declareth.

Psal.146.

Psalma.18.

Hester.6.

The wylknes
of tyrants.

Thirde, let vs consider the craftes that tyrantes vse in oppressing their subiectes. For **Pharao** seemeth not to vse his absolute power, but craftily circumuienteth the people of **Israel**, and so vseth the matter, that he seemeth to haue great regarde both of publike tranquillitie and equitie: and yet in deede he cruelly persecuteth a people spoyled of their auncient libertie. For vndoubtedly, he complayned that it was not reason and right, that a straunge Nation shoulde be free, and haue more libertie than the **Egyptians**. Furthermore, he sheweth that it was a dangerous matter, and to be feared; least they shoulde ioyne with some forreyne Nation, and aspyre to the kingdome of **Egypt**. But if we consider the falling out of the matter, the ende was altogether couetousnesse, which taught the **Egyptians** howe to waie rich, by oppressing and abusing the labor of others. Hereof followed a crueltie passing all other, which the very infantes new borne coulde not escape. So lawfull thinke they it is, for them to doe all things, which once haue violated and broken all lawe and right, and haue tasted any priuate aduantage or profite thereby. Let vs marke these crafts, that we may learne the easilier to beware of the. Yet let vs not be discouraged, forasmuch as it cometh to passe many times, that tyrants enterprises, set forth the power & glory of **God**, who can most easily ouerturne the deuises of people as the godly prophet teacheth, and as appereth, came to passe in this place.

Nowe, **Steuen** goyng forth with his narration, bringeth forth **Moyles**, in whome the **Jewes**, as in their Captaine, deliuerer, and lawe maker, chiefly gloried. And he proueth that he was preserved and aduanced to so high a dignitie, through the singuler goodnesse of **God**, and had nothyng wherein to reioyce. Whereupon it is easie for euery man to conclude, that they which were deliuered by his ministerie, and receyued the lawe of him, were much more bounde to the goodnesse of **God**. There are thre reasons whereby he proueth that that we haue sayde. First, arguing of the time, he sayth, he was borne when the tyranne most raged, and when he coulde by none other meanes be saued, than by the secret working and goodnesse of **God**. He addeth another poynt, that euen when he was newe borne, there appeared manifest tokens of **Goddes** fauour, which surely can be ascribed to no deserte of **Moyles**. In the meane season, we must note howe he was then borne to be their deliuerer, when there was almost no hope of deliuerie, and when himselfe was lyke to bee in daunger, before he coulde declare anye token of his valiauntnesse in deliuering of them. So **God** vseth to succour his people, when all hope is past, and (as **Esaie** sayeth) that he maye doe his worke, his straunge worke, and to

Moses saued
and brought
to dignitie by
the goodnesse
of God.

Of the tyme.

Esaie.28.

forget

Esay. 11.

Of the cause
efficient moou-
ing his Pa-
rents.Of the ma-
ner and or-
der of his
deliuerp.

Exod. 2.

forget it (as it were) that he may execute it afterwarde with the more glo-
rie. For it is Gods proper worke to saue men, which he then doth, when all
hope and helpe seemeth to them quite past. The lyke thing fell out in Chri-
stes natiuitie. For when the Iewes had lost their libertie, and were com-
pelled to pay tare and tribute to a straunge Prince, and an Ethnike, and
euery man was reasled by Cyrenius, then was that promised (and so long
looked for) Sauour of the world borne. Yea, he was borne of the stocke of
Dauid, where as it had lost all dignitie, and seemed as Esaye once sayde, a
rotten and vnprofitable stocke. Therfore let no man despayre in imminent
afflictions.

The seconde argument whereby he proueth Moses to be saued by the
mercy of God, he taketh of his Parents, who brought him vppre thre mo-
neths, at home at their house, contrary to the kings commaundement. For
this was (as Paule testifieth and interpreteth it Hebr. 11.) a worke of fayth,
whereby they respecting Gods mercie, and his promises, were so comfort-
ed, that they durst breake the kings commaundement. But that fayth and
boldenesse of minde, are the gyftes of God, is moze euident, than needeth
long proufe. So therfore must the fayth of Moyles parents be considered,
that we encouraged by their example, must learne to contemne those wic-
ked commaundementes of tyrantes, which no man can obey with godly-
nesse. For in such thinges must Peters rule be followed, which plainely
sayth: we must rather obey God than men.

Thirde, he rehearseth the order and maner, howe Moyles was sa-
ued, that the grace and power of God, may the moze appere. For Pharaos
daughter toke him, being cast out into the riuer Nylus, and brought him
vp, as if it had bene hir owne sonne. Furthermore, being trayned vppre in
the Court, in all maner of wisedome of the Egyptians, he became expert
in all qualities belonging to a ruler and gouernour. Who will in these
thinges attribute anye thing to mannes desertes or merites: who will
not acknowledge Gods singuler grace and fauour: Here is the power of
God marueylous wonderfull, who disappoynteth and laugheth at tyrants
enterprises. Pharaos bringeth vp in his owne Court, and as it were in hys
owne bosome, the Captaine and deliuerer of that people, which he sought
most to oppresse. So whyle Achab persecuteth the Prophetes, and the
Church, Abdias a most faythfull defender of the Prophetes, and true doc-
trine, is in greatest honor, and authoritie in the Court. So vnder the Ro-
maine Emperours, sometime the mainteyners of the true fayth, had grea-
test charge in the fielde, although the Emperours would haue had the faith
destroyed. And many other examples there are, which declare howe the
greatest enemies of Christ haue furthered and set forwarde the Church.
Who therfore will be afrayde of their attempts, which are ruled by the br-
dle of Gods power and prouidence: Let vs also consider howe he sayeth
Moyles was brought vp in all maner wisedome of the Egyptians. Chri-
stians therfore maye reade the workes of Gentyles and Philosophers,
as it appeareth Paule did, by his writings and sermons, wherein he feate-
ly placeth the sentences of the Ethnikes. Yet a meane must be obserued,
least the mysteries of the worde of God, beginne to be contemned of those
that delyght in Gentyle philosophie, and that we make not to much of those
things in their writings, which openly impugne the propheties of heauen-

lye wisdom. This thing cometh to passe in Astrologers, and in the ouer curious searchers of naturall causes, which yet are not ashamed, to defend their vngodlynesse by Moyse's example. But they ought rather to followe his modestie, who in the description of the frame and workmanship of this worlde, hauing great occasion to haue shewed and set out his Egypticall wisdom, comprehendeth all those things in marueylous playnnesse and breuitie, that the curious wittes of Mathematicall, and Philosophers, haue wearied their braynes vnprofitably about, nowe these manye hundred yeares. For where he referreth the causes of things to God alone (as the Scripture euerywhere doth) he easily saw, that it was a wicked ostentation of the wit, to spoyle God of any part of his gloze, and to bring the gouernance of the world in subiection and bondage to the course of Creatures. Therefore their foolishnesse and madnesse is detestable, which make Abraham and Moyse the authours of iudiciall astrologie. Let vs rather depende vpon Gods appoyntment and prouidence onely, who of his goodnesse chose both Abraham and Moyse, and hath by them promised vs hys sonne to be our Saniour and King: To whome be all prayse, honoz, power, and gloze. Amen.

The. xlvij. Homelie.

AND when he was full fourtie yeares olde, it came into his heart to visite his brethren the children of Israel: And when hee sawe one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and aduenged his quarrell that had the harme done to him, and smote the Aegyptian. For he supposed his brethren would haue vnderstande how that God by his hande shoulde deliuer them, but they vnderstoode not. And the next daye he shewed himselfe to them as they stroue, and would haue set them at one agayne, saying: Sirs, yee are brethren: why hurt yee one another? but he that did his neyghbour wrong, thrust him awaye, saying: who made thee a Ruler and a Iudge ouer vs? wilt thou kill mee as thou diddest the Aegyptian yesterdaye? Then fledde Moyse at that saying, and was a straunger in the lande of Madian, where hee begate two sonnes.



Whereas the blessed Martyr Steuen following the order and tracke of the storie of the fathers, is comen to Moyse, in whom the Jewes so greatly glorie, as in their deliuerer and lawe giuer, he diligently handleth his hystorie, partly bicause Moyse, touching their deliuerie out of Egypt, was a figure of Christ, and bare witnesse of Christ: and partly bicause he would not seme to be a contemner of Moyse, as they accused him, in that he preached agaynst the Temple and Ceremonies of the lawe. And bicause he would quite take from them, the bayne assiaunce they had in outward ceremonies, he sheweth that the fathers so little trusted in mannes righteounesse, that Moyse himselfe had nothing whereof to reioyce before God, bycause through no helpe of man, but by the onely grace of God he was saued, and called to such honour as he had. Wherevpon it followeth, that whatsoever afterwarde he did, worthy of any singuler prayse and commendation, it was

was to be attributed vnto Gods goodnesse and grace. The same is more plainly set forth in this present place, where he declareth how Moyses beganne to vse his offite, where vnto God had appoynted him, and howe the fathers vnworthily despised the benefyte of deliuey giuen them, and very vnconuenteously reiecte Moyses their reuenger and defender.

Moses stirred
by by God,
taketh vpon
him the office
of a deliuerer.

He beginneth with Moyses age, and with the cause that moued him to take vpon him the charge of the people, being so grievously afflicted, he sayth he was fourtie yeares olde, before he gaue any token of the peoples deliuerie. In the meane time, liuing in the Court, among the Nobles of the Realme, he seemed to haue little regarde of the people, which thing Steuen manifestly teacheth, where he sayth, when he was full fourtie yeares of age, it came into his heart to visite his brethzen: Who put that thought in his hart: Or else coulde it spring of it selfe, in such an one, as had bene brought vp in Courtly pastymes, and taught in the sciences of Egypt: No. Then it was the secreete motion of the holye spirite, which twitched Moyses by the eare, being as one in a sleepe, and awoke his mynde, with the consideration of auncient promyses, making hym to ioyne himselfe to that people, of whose stocke he vnderstode, that the Sauour of mankind shoulde be borne. Paule agreeth herewith, which attributeth Moyses doing vnto sayth, which sayth all the whole Scripture teacheth to be the gyfte of God. For he sayeth: By sayth Moyses when he was great (or in honor) refused to be called the sonne of Pharaoes daughter, and chose rather to suffer aduersitie with the people of God, than to enioye the pleasures of sinne for a season, and esteemed the rebuke of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Also it appeareth very evidently by this place, that all the prayse of their deliuerie, is to be ascribed to God alone, who did not onely giue Moyses strength, but put a will thereto in his heart also.

Hebru. ii.

Except we
be drawne of
God, we doe
no good.

2. Cor 3.
Iohn. 6.
Cant. 1.

This must in the meane season, serue for our learning, that Moyses toke not on hym, the care of his brethzen, tyll he was stirred by by God. Hereof gather we an vniuersall doctrine, that they which are yet ledde with worldly and fleshely desyres, and ruled by worldly wysedome, can doe nothing that is good, or commendable in Gods affayres, vnlesse they be drawne, by the motion of the holy ghost: forasmuch as of our selues (as Paule sayth) we can not thinke well. And Christ teacheth vs that no man cometh to him, except the father drawe him. Wherefore the byrde in Salomon cryeth out, not without a cause: Drawe mee after thee. Wherevpon it foloweth agayne, that no prayse of merite, is due to our workes, but that whatsoeuer good thing we doe, it is of grace onely.

Wee must o-
bey God, cal-
ling & draw-
ing vs.
Iohn. 10.

Also, Moyses example teacheth vs our dutie, that when God stirreth and draweth vs, we must yelde thereto, and shewe our selues obedyent. For of such force is Gods calling with the saythfull, that it can not want effect, for as much as Christ sayth, this is the properie of his sheepe, to heare his voyce, and to follow it. Which thing they vse to doe, with such feruencie and zeale, that they despise all thinges, that might hynder their calling, as nopsome, and but verie dunge, and againe thinke nothing intollerable, or to harde that is ioynd with Gods calling. Both these thinges we see in the example of Moyses. For as soone as he heareth the worde of God speaking in his heart, without anye delape he refuseth the deliciaes of the Court, the pompe of the Realme, the dignities of publike authoritie, the

friend-

friendship of great men, riches, ease, and whatsoeuer else like is to be had in the Court. In steade of these, he chooseth traueyles, pouertie, shame, and infinite daungers, wherewith he saue the people of God euery daye vexed, vnder most cruell enemies. And that we see Moses did, the same we see in the Apostles, who although they forsooke not so great riches, yet that little they had, they forsooke, with as earnest an affection and zeale as he did. Vnto whome we may ioine Zachæus, and diuers other. With the example of whome, if we compare our owne sluggish slouthfulnesse, who thinke it not meete nor reasonable, to lose or suffer any thing, for Christes sake, it shall plainly appeare, howe farre we yet be from a christian perfection. For this is that forsaking and denying of themselves, that Christ requireth of his Disciples. This is that obedience of fayth, that Paule euery where bygeth, and without the which, the profession of a christian name, is vnprofitable.

But some will object: we confesse all that is here sayde of Moses, yet it is to be thought, that the fathers by their merites deserued, that God should appoint hym, to be their reuenger and defendour. Steuen therefore prudently preuenteth this obiection, and sheweth, that the fathers of the Jewes, in their deliuerie out of Egypt, deserued so little prayse or glozve, that rather they were worthy to haue bene perpetually in bondage, because they reiected the benefite of their redemption, offered them of God by Moses verie churlishly and vnworthily. And for a prooue hereof he alleageth the storie, written in the seconde of Erasmus, where he may see more, that thinketh Luke in this place to brieue or short. The ende of all is, that the fathers despised the benefite of God, and Moses their deliuerer, wherefore their whole departure out of Egypt, was to be attributed onely to the fauour of God. Steuen also manifestly reuerteth the contempt of Moses, wherewith they charged him, vpon their forefathers, and bypraydeth them woth their olde vngodlynesse and ingratitude, not with rayling intent, but to shewe them howe well they followed their fathers steppes, seeing with like contempt they reiected Christ, whom Moses long before commaunded them to heare, and to follow.

But that we omitt not such things, as serue for our erudition: first of all Moses is to be considered, and in him the dutie of a gouernour or Magistrate. He is not ashamed of the people whose Shepheard and ouerser God had appoynted hym to be. Therefore no man must be ashamed of the people committed to him of God, be he of neuer so great dignitie, in the worlde. For though the people be neuer so much despised in the iudgement of the worlde, yet in Gods sight they are verie deare, who hath bouchesafe to redeeme them by the death of his owne sonne. He also defendeth them agaynst open violence and tyranny with armed power, and protecteth them, though woth the daunger of his owne lyfe. For thus doth Salomon describe the dutie of a good Prince: He shall deliuer the poore, when he cryeth, the needie also, and him that hath no helper. He shall be fauourable vnto the simple and needie, and shall preserue the soules of the poore. He shall deliuer their soules from falshood and wrong, and deere shall their blood be in his sight. And Paule teacheth vs, that God hath gyuen the Magistrate the sword to thys ende to keepe vnder the frowardnesse of the vngodly, and to defende the innocent and good. Therefore they greatly are deceyued,

The deliuerie
of the fathers
out of Aegypt
was of grace.

The dutie
of a Magi-
strate.

Psalm. 72.

Roma. 13.

which being bragge but of a bare and emptie tittle, haue no care of the people, but let other tyrannes to misseintreate them. And these things chiefly considered, be in religion, which Princes must see mainteyned among the people, that they be not drawne from God, by the superstitious traditions of men. Therefore Esaye calleth princes, the Nurrices of the Church, the glorie of which name, would God they would acknowledge, which suffer the people committed to their charge, to be in bondage of the cruell tyrannye of Popes, and their wicked counsels and decrees. Besides this, he is a meane of concord betweene his brethren, the maintenaunce whereof, it becommeth them aboue all things, well to see too, that will haue their common weales in safetie. For this saying of the Romane hystory, is confirmed by the example of many kingdomes and nations: By concord small things increase, through discorde great things come to decay. And no doubt but theyr ende is alwayes unhappie, that are at contynuall discension among themselves. And if we now compare Moses minde and doings, with those which now a dayes, haue the rule in christendome, we shall lesse marueyle at the unhappie state of our age: because now such raigne euerywhere as are both ashamed of their people, and carelesse contemne them, or else with ouer great exactions, vtterly impouerishe them, and mozeouer mainteyne diuision among them: and to conclude, thinke theyr greatest prayse to consist in warres rashely and vnadvisedly taken in hande, and in needlesse and vnecessarie shedding of bloude.

Let no man
be grieved at
the ingrati-
tude of the
people.

Let vs also examine what thanks Moses gotte of the Iewes, by his louing benefite. Seuen sayth it was verie little. For that naughty packe which feared not to doe his brother iniurie, of hys stowte naughtynesse, burst out agaynst him in all opprobrious maner, saying: Who made thee a Ruler and a Iudge ouer vs? wilt thou kyll me also, as thou diddest the Aegyptian yesterday? In which wordes, he bpbraydeth him, as though he tooke vpon him, to be a ruler, hauing refused and forsaken all rule and authoritie for their sakes. He also accuseth him of manslaughter, yea, of murder, which with the daunger of his owne lyfe, procured the safegarde of the people. And although there is but one noted of this naughty ingratitude: yet it appeareth, many were like minded, because none rebuked him for his sawfinesse and malapertnesse, and not long after, Moses doing came to Pharaos knowledge, whereof no Egyptian was wyttling. It must needes therfore be, that an Israelite was his accuser. And they were no whyt the better, after they were delyuered out of Egypt, and had learned by many signes and wonders, that he was sent of God to be their Captaine and defendor. For as oft, as all things fell not out, after their mindes, so oft they accused Moses of treason and falshood. And this is the property of the world on this sort, to recompence their best benefactors. And that that fell to Moses, came to passe also vnto Dauid, Ezechias, Iosias, and all the Prophets, & among the Gentyles to Myltiades, Phocion, Camillus, the Scypions, and infinite others. The consideration of whome serueth to teache vs that we be not grieved, with the ingratitude of the worlde, and that we leaue not our duetie and vocation, for any like cause. Let vs therefore, looke for recompence at hys hande, who is a most liberall rewarder. Let vs remember, that euen now is layde vp for vs in heauen a great rewarde, and that if we be faythfull in a little, we shall be appointed hereafter ouer much. See Mathew the fifth,

and

and.xxv. chapter.

Moreover, Moses example comprehendeth in it the mysteries of our redemption, and sheweth vs with our unkindnesse toward Christ. For as Moses forsooke Pharaos court, & the riches of Egypt, visited his brethren, and took upon him their defence: so Jesus Christ being in the glory of his father, did vouchsafe to humble himselfe, & by his incarnation became our brother, to take upon him our quarrell & defence. Agayne, as Moses reuenged & defended the Israelite by killing the Egyptian: so Jesus vanquished and slue the deuill, & set vs at liberty. For he is that seed of the woman that was promised, by whose merite the serpents head should be troden downe. And as Moses was the author and perswader of his brethren to conuerse: so Jesus Christ prescribeth to them, whom he hath set at libertie by the merite of his death, and made children and members of his body, none other thing, but precepts of charitie, and hath appointed charitie for a cognizance for his disciples, whereby to be knowne. And as the Israelites were not afrayde, to murmur against Moses: so manye persons feare not to murmur most unworthily against the lawes of Christ, and fewe there be that acknowledge him for their king and deliuerer, because the most part of men, either giue the glory, to creatures that he alone hath deserued, or else boldly robbing him, ascribe it to themselves, and to the merites of their owne workes. Therefore we are to impudent to charge the Iewes with the crime of vngreatfullnesse, where we our selues, offende much more in the same against the sonne of God.

It shall be profitable, now to consider the punishment that God bleseth against unkinde persons. Moses is dryuen awaye, and entertayned of Iethro in Madian, taketh his daughter to wyfe, by whome he hath two children, to comfort him in his exylement. In the meane season the Israelites lack their reuenger and deliuerer, and are fayne to feele the smart of tyranny fortie yeares longer, out of which they might now haue bene deliuered, but that they draue Moses away. So many times it cometh to passe, that our naughtinesse, is cause that God can not helpe vs according to the goodnesse of his nature. This is like as when they came to the borders of the lande of Chanaan, and through their grutching and murmuring, deserued to be brought backe agayne, into the wyldernesse, and fortie yeares longe were afflicted with all kinde of miserie, and there dyed. Therefore they which are the authors of their owne aduersitie accuse God vndereruedly. Let them marke this, which complayne of the diseases which they procure themselves, through their owne distemperance, likewise they that can not away with pouertie, being through their owne riotousnesse fallen into the same. The same is lyke also even in the businesse of our saluation. For where many disdayne to embrace the righteousnesse of God, which he offereth vs in his sonne, and dare set by their owne righteousnesse, it cometh to passe through their owne desertes, that they are able neyther to auouch their owne righteousnesse in Gods sight, ne yet to be iustified and saved by Christ.

Last of all, we haue to consider Moyses flight, by whose example we are taught, that it is lawfull for vs sometyne to proude for our selues by flying, and to keepe our selues for more commodious seasons. For both we reade that Christ so did oftentimes, and commaunded his Apostles to

A figure of
Christ and
our redemp-
tion.

Phil.2.

Iohn.13.15.

The punish-
ment of the
ingratefull
Iewes.

Num.14.

Rom.10.

How the gods
ly may some-
time lie.

Math.10.

doe the lyke. But here we haue neede to take good hærde, and to be circumspect, least vnder the pretence of Christs commaundement, we seeke a cloke wherewith to hyde our feare and dastardynesse, and so by vn honest flying leaue the standing wherein we are appoynted of God. Moyses fled, and yet is not to be accused therfore, because he vnderstode by his bngentle repulse, that the tyme of deliuerie was not yet come, and that he coulde not as yet bring them out of Egypt, who so disdainfully cast him of. But as soone as they beganne to acknowledge that he was appoynted of God for their reuenger, and yelded themselues to the calling of God, then could he by no threates of the Tyrant be discouraged to flie any more, neyther could he haue auoyded the name of a deceyuer, if now he woulde rather haue prouyded for his owne safegard, than obeyed God. So read we that Christ fledde, when he knewe his howre was not yet come. But when it was come, he went to his death pacientlye, and without feare. Therfore whosoever is in any publike office or charge, let them set this rule before them, and let them not thinke they may leaue them, whose mindes they see bent to persist in Gods vocation. But if the malice of the people be such, that they first forsake their dutie, and dishonestly reiect their magistrates, (be they secular, or preachers of the worde) faythfully doing their dutie, there is no cause, but that they maye as Christ hath commaunded, seeke their owne suretie by flying, and spare themselues for better times and oportunitie. Here the obedience of fayth tempered with the loue of God and our neyghbour, shall be much profitable. For this shall cause that we be not blinded and deceyued with priuate affections. God graunt that we all being mindful of his grace and good will, maye diligently defende our vocation, that being with right course come to the marke of blisse, we maye liue in heauen with Iesus Christ our Lorde: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The. xlix. Homelie.

AND when fourtie yeres were expyred, there appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sina an Aungell of the Lorde in a flame of fire in a bushe. When Moyses sawe it, he woondred at the sight. And as he drew neare to beholde, the voyce of the Lorde came to him. I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Iacob. Moyses trembled, and durst not beholde. Then sayde the Lord to him: Put of thy shooes from thy feete, for the place where thou standest is holye grounde. I haue perfite lyce the affliction of my people which is in Aegypt, and I haue hearde their groning, and am come downe to deliuer them. And now come, and I will sende thee into Aegypt.



Because Steuen was accused by his aduersaries, that he had spoken wicked and blasphemous wordes agaynst Moyses, and all the ceremonies of God, giuen by Moyses: therfore he comprehendeth in fewe wordes (yet with sufficient exposition) all the hystorie of Moyses, partly to shewe that he thought reuerently of him, and partly to proue that the saluation of manne, ought

ought to be attributed to no ceremonies; bicause whatsoeuer good or excellent thing was in Moyles, he had it through no desert of his, but by the mere grace and fauour of God. The principall scope and ende of all these thinges, is to call the Jewes from the vayne assurance that they had in the Ceremonialles of the lawe, and to trust in the onely grace of God, through Christ. And to this ende he declared Moyles manner of birth, his bringing vp, and first conuersation among the Israelites, shewing further, howe vnto the their fathers declared them selfe to be, of such a deliuerer, seeing they reiected him with the greatest ingratitude that could be, in so much that he was fayne to liue like a banished man among the Madianites. Nowe followeth the solemne calling of Moyles, wherby he was restored to his office agayne, in the which, that we may the more easily perceiue the tokens of Gods fauour, we will consider euery poynt thereof in order.

First the time is noted when Moyles was called. It was the fourtyeth yeare of his banishment in Madian, which came to passe in the fourescore yeare of his age. Then he ioyneth the place where he was, and his kinde of lyfe. For he sayth he was in the wilderness, where he kept the sheepe of Iethro his father in lawe, as may be seene Exod.3. Nowe, if we consider all the time of these fourtie yeares, it shall appere, Moyles serued God without anye Temple, or ceremonies of the lawe. Bicause it is playne these things were instituted afterwarde. And where he was in the meane while excluded from the company and common weale of the Jewes, it remaineth, that it must be the onely and mere grace of God, that he was thus called. In the meane season we haue diligently to consider howe that as soone as he would haue ioyned himselfe to the church of God, he felt y^e griefe of long banishment, and of a noble man came to be a keeper of sheepe. For hereof may be gathered a generall rule, teaching vs what we all may trust to, when we forsake the worlde, to be ioyned vnto the Church of God. We fall into diuers afflictions, bicause this worlde can neither suffer that falling from it, nor cannot abyde the light of the truth. And as Moyles found Iethro to be his hoste and father in lawe, but yet is made no more account of, than to keepe sheepe: so the godly with them that giue them housewome, and seeme greatlye to fauour their part, liue yet but miserablye, and as it were in contempt. This is the greatest temptation of all other, and which sometime more woundeth the heart, than that that open enemies cruellye commit agaynst vs. Therefore Christ warneth vs that we rashly take not vpon vs, the profession of his name: but that we first trie our selues, whether we be able (if neede so requyre) to suffer banishment, pouertie, infamie, persecution, or such other lyke, for his names sake. And when these thinges come to passe, let vs followe Moyles modestie and constaunt fayth, which no doubt was sundry wayes tempted. Yet he ouercometh through that fayth which before caused him to preferre the rebuke of Christ before the riches of Egypt. Let vs also by the same, ouercome the assaultes of temptation, and not be ashamed of the crosse of Christ, which he for our sake hath first boughed safe to beare. For so it shall come to passe, that he will not be ashamed of vs when he shall come in the glory of the father to iudge the quicke and the deade.

Secondarily, Steuen sheweth who called Moyles, verily an Angell of the Lorde, which he sayth appeared to him in the desert. Yet the same Angell

1. The time
of Moyles
calling.

Luc.24.

Marc. 8.
2. An Angell
of the
Lorde calleth
Moyles.

gell

1. Cor. 10.

Ephes. 1.

1. Pet. 1.

Iohn. 8.

Dan. 7.

1. Pet. 1.

The fyer
bushe.

gell within a while after, sayth: I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And againe afterwarde, he sayth, it was he through whose working and power Moyſes wrought ſignes and wonders in Egypt, and which was guide vnto the people by the way of the deſert, to whom Paule the Apoſtle teſtifieth to haue bene Jeſus Chriſt, that promiſed ſauior of the world. Steuen therefore calleth this Jeſus the Angell of the Lord, not for that he acknowledged in him, no greater thing, or of no more excellencie than in an Angell, but as ſeeming to imitate Eſay, who on a time called him the Angell or meſſenger of the great Counſell, not in that he tooke on him a nature Angelicall (which thing Paule to the Hebrewes. 2. cap. expreſſely denieth) but in that he was ſent of God the father into the world, and accompliſhed that great and eternall deuiſe, and counſell of God concerning the redemption of mankind. For Paule teacheth, that we were choſen in him before the foundations of the worlde were layde. And Peter ſayth, he was predeſtinate or foreordained from euerlaſting, that we ſhoulde be redeemed through his merit. We muſt thinke it is not without a cauſe that he is ſayd to haue appeared to Moyſes. For hereby it is euident that Chriſt tooke not his beginning when he was borne of the virgin Marie, but that he was fro euerlaſting: yea, and talked with the fathers in tymes paſt of ſuch thinges as belonged to their ſaluation. For although he yet was not incarnate and made man, yet in his diuine power and goodneſſe, he coulde not choſe but helpe and deliuer them, of whom in the time appointed, he ment to take his manhoode. Therefore he ſayth he was before Abraham, and that Abraham ſawe him. And Daniel ſawe in the Clowdes of heauen, a Iudge lyke vnto the ſonne of a man, which came vnto the olde aged. Furthermore, Peter plainly confeſſeth that the Prophetes in tymes paſt were inſpired with the ſpिरितe of Chriſt, and ſo prophecied of things to come. Therefore great is the temeritie of thoſe, which vtterly reſuſe all the olde Prophetes, and ſay their bookes belong not at all vnto vs, whereas both they were illumina- ted with Chriſtes ſpirit, and diuers and ſundrye wayes bare witneſſe of him. See Iohn. 5. Luc. 24. Lette vs rather acknowledge the goodneſſe of God, which in tymes paſt did vouchſafe to declare himſelf to the old fathers, and by this meane woulde ſet forth vnto vs, how to knowe the antiquitie and certaintie of our beliefe.

Furthermore, Steuen diligently teacheth vs, in what fourme and faſhion, Chriſt appeared vnto Moyſes. For he ſayth, the Angell of the Lord, which was Chriſt, appeared to Moyſes, in a flame of fire in a buſhe. This is the auncient guiſe & blaſe of God, to talke with men in tymes paſt, in ſome viſible likneſſe, which men were not able to abide his godly nature and maieſtie. We haue examples euerywhere, in the hylories of the Patriarches and Prophetes. This cauſeth men to be attent and heedfull, and to be in admiration of God, which otherwiſe woulde careleſly contemne all godlyneſſe: yet God for the moſt part tooke on him ſuch formes and ſhapes, as were moſt agreeable, with the preſent affayres, tymes, and perſons. Which thing we alſo ſee done, in this place. For he woulde by a fiery buſhe, ſet before Moyſes eyes the condicion and ſtate of his people, which were afflicted in Egypt. They burned being incenſed with the cruell tyrannie of Pharao, but they were not conſumed, becauſe the ſonne of God was in the middle of them, which at the time appoynted, ſhoulde take his manhoode of the po-

ſteritie

steritie of them. And this is the state of the Church in all ages, in the consideration wherof, it shal be profitable for vs often to be occupied. It is like a bza mble bushe, a weake & feeble flock: but such as cannot easily be scattred abroad, bicause thozowe faith it is most straightly knit and ioyned in Christ, the heade thereof. Therefore as husbandmen put fire vnto bzambles and thoznes, cleauing one to another, to burne them altogether: so this worlde putteth the fire of persecution to the Church, and with one fire goeth about to destrope it all at once. And Christ suffereth this fire to be kindled, bicause it is needefull this way to haue the fayth of his people, to be tryed, and the fleshe to be kept vnder and bridled: yet he suffreth not his Church vtterly to be consumed, but is himselfe in the middle thereof. For he sayeth: I will not leaue you comfortlesse. I am with you vnto the ende of the worlde. Hither to belong whatsoeuer things God hath done for the defence of his Church, since the beginning of the worlde. Caine first set fire to it, who though he killed his brother Abel, yet he could not destroy his fayth, and much lesse hinder God, from rayling vp a freshe spring of his Church in Seth. Neyther after that could the mightie men, which went befoze the floud, any thing let, but when they perished as they deserued, God could marueylously preserue certaine remnaunts of his Church, thzough the benefite of the Arke. This bushe burned often also in the time of the Iudges, but it was allwaye preserued by Gods aide and assistance. It burned in Babylon, from whence yet the Lorde brought it agayne, and deliuered it. It burned more than once, after their retorne from Babylon, and at length, when Antiochus reygned, it seemed almost past recouerie, when God rayled vp the Machabees, who restored Gods religion, and brought the people to their libertie agayne. It burned after Christ was bozne, whole thze hundred yeares almost, vntill the time of Constantine the great. Yet God neuer fayled it, who is able to defende his people in the middle of the fire, as he sometime did Daniels felowes. It burneth euen at this day, and there be euerywhere such as put fire bzandes vnder it, and inflame the mightiest Monarches of the worlde with hatred agaynst hir. Yet shall they neuer preuaile so much as they woulde, but shall feele the wzath of Gods vengeaunce, in whose sight, the death of those that be his is precious, and will not suffer the bloude of hys beloued, to be vreuenged. Yea, whyle the persecuting tyrants, put fire vnder the Church, they lyke drie woode are consumed with the fire of Gods iudgement, the Church in the meane whyle, abyding in the middle of the fire of persecution, lyke a Leade oz Cauldron, where mettall tryers melt and get out golde and siluer. See what is sayde of these similitudes. Zacharie. 12. and. 13.

John. 14.
Math. 28.

Psal. 116.

3. Moses
calling.

The God of
f fathers. &c.

But let vs come to his calling, whereby he is restored to the office, which he beganne to execute, fortie yeares befoze. This calling hath in it certaine pointes, the consideration wherof, is verie profitable. First, God declareth who hee is, least Moses might doubt any thing of the certaintie of his vocation. For he sayth to him, as he was amazed with the sight of the bushe burning. I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Iacob. It pleased God, among many of his styles, to vse this tytle chiefly, to call to Moses remembraunce, the couenaunt made with Abraham, and the promises made long befoze, vnto the fathers, declaring thereby, that he was not forgetfull of his couenaunt and pro-

mises

Rom. 8.

Iohn. 11.

Math. 22.

The shooes
must be put
off.

Iohn. 4.

Iohn. 13.

God seeth the
affliction of
his people.

Psalm. 56.

myself, although he hitherto suffered the people to be afflicted. By which example we are taught, that in aduersitie, we should chiefly haue respect, to Gods promises, which God can neyther forget, nor fayle to performe. Yea, we see the truth of Gods promises so infallible, that God forsaketh not the deade, whome he hath once taken to his tuition. For he is the Lord both of lyfe and death. Wherefore neyther lyfe nor death, can seporate vs from the loue of God. For whether we liue or die, we be the Lords. And to this ende it is that he sayth, he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, & Iacob, which yet were deade, long before, he thus spake. And Christ by the same reason, calleth Lazarus his friend, being both dead and buryed. Wherunto chiefly it appertayneth, that Christ out of this place, tooke a generall doctrine, to confirme the resurrection of the deade, and certaintie of eternall lyfe, against the Sadducees caillations. Let vs therefore be occupied in the meditation of this tyle, as oft as feare of death ariseth in vs, and we shall perceyue by and by, that we shall be delyuered, from all care and pensiveness.

But whereas Moses feared aswell with the sight of the burning bushe, as with the voyce of God, durst not come nære, by and by, he is tolde what he must doe. For God sayth moreouer: Put of thy shooes from thy feete, for the place whereon thou standest, is holy ground. So he sayth, bicause of hys obone being there, and for that he had appointed that place to set forth hys lawe in. It is not without a cause, that Steuen maketh mention of this precept, for hereby he meaneth to admonishe the Jewes, what God in tyme past requyred of Moses, and what he also requyrez of vs now a dayes, that is to saye, neyther temple, neyther leuiticall worshipping, no colde ceremonies, whether it be the bloud of Oren, or Goates, but that we should purge our minds from beastly affections, which are signified by the shooes, and should be wholly ioynded to him, by sinceritie of fayth, and puritie of mindes. For this is that true worshipping of God, which Christ otherwise sayth, consisteth in spirite and in truth. And hereunto belongeth his precept of washing the feete, whereof we ought to haue greater respect, than of any outwarde things. We must also marke euery where, howe all the scriptures testifie vnto vs, that God is present in euery place, and howe daylie exampls abundantly proue the same.

Last of all, God openeth his intent and pleasure vnto Moses: I haue (sayth he) perfectly seene the affliction of my people in Aegypt, and haue heard their groning, and am come downe to delyuer them. Which words, serue most aptly to Steuens purpose. For they declare, that there was no desert in the Israelites, for the which they ought to be delyuered, and that God regarded nothing in them, but their afflictions, wherewith they were miserably troubled, whereupon it followeth, that all the benefite of their deliuerie, appertayneth to the mere grace of God. We are also taught, that God doth not neglect his people, although he sometime seemeth so to doe. He seeth their teares, which Dauid sayth, are put in a Bottle in his sight. He heareth not onely their crie, but also their groning, bicause he searcheth the heart and the reynes. And they that reade hystories, finde exampls euery where, whereby it may easily be proued. Let this serue therefore, to comfort vs, when we are forsaken, of false and unkinde persons. Let it also serue, to instruct vs, that we vnadvisedly afflict not those, whome God

hath

hath so special care of. Vereto appertayneth that that is written, con-
cerning Moyses, fatherlesse and straungers, crying vnto him. And that
that is written in Zacharie, the second chap. He that toucheth you, toucheth
the apple of mine eye. And chiefly let vs haue regarde, that we giue our
selues wholly to that God, which considering the miserie of all mankind,
hath giuen vs his sonne, Iesus Christ, to be our deliuerer and reuenger;
to whome be praye, honor, glorie and power, for euer. Amen.

The. I. Homely.

THIS Moyses whome they forsooke (saying who made thee a Ruler and
a Iudge?) the same did God sende to bee a Ruler, and a deliuerer by the
handes of the Aungell, which appeared to him in the bushe. And the same
brought them out, shewing woonders and signes in Aegypt, and in the redde
Sea, and in the wildernesse fortie yeares. This is that Moyses which sayde vn-
to the children of Israel: A Prophet shall the Lorde your God rayse vp vnto
you, of your brethren, like vnto mee, him shall you heare.



Although Steuen taught none other
waye of fayth and saluation, than that that is foun-
ded vpon the merite of Iesus Christ, the promised
Saviour, to whome Moyses and the Prophets beare
witnesse: yet he is accused that he teacheth a newe
fayth and an erroneous, yea, that he is a blasphem-
er of Moyses and the fathers, and goeth about, to abo-
lish the fayth which they obserued, and deliuered
vs. The same state was the worlde in then; that in
these daies it is, where they that follow the fayth deliuered by the Apostles,
and sealed with the bloud of the Martyrs, are accused; as subverters of
ancient religion, and condemners of the olde fathers. But what we haue
to doe, in thys case, Steuens example teacheth vs. He reasoneth diligently
and at large, touching the beliefe of the fathers, chiefly he cyteth the hys-
torie of Moyses, that by rehearfall therof, he might shew partly how reuerently
he iudged of Moyses, and partly proue that he was no enimie to the aunci-
ent religion of the fathers, although he taught them that those ceremonies
were nowe to be put awaye, without the which, they well ynough serued
God, yea without the which, Moyses also pleased God, and was aduanced
to so high dignitie and honor. So the vnlearneder sort, howe a dayes must
be taught, what the beliefe and doctrine of the Martyrs was in tyme past,
and howe they were saued without those things, whereabout now a daies,
is such bytter contention. But after Steuen had brought his oration to the
solempne vocation of Moyses, then proferreth he the same at length, and
entreth into the prayes of Moyses, and first testifieth that he acknowledged
all things in Moyses, that God bestowed vpon him: Then proueth he hys
doctrine of Iesus Christ, by the testimonie of Moyses, whose meaning he
fayth, was not that the Israelites should stick in the lawe and ceremonies,
giuen by him, but that they should haue an eye, to that speciall Prophet,
which God afterwarde should sende, of whome he was but a signe and fi-
gure onely. This is a notable place, whereby we are taught, that we must

1. Moses the
ruler and de-
liuerer of
Israel.

God aduans-
eth the ab-
iect and de-
spised.

Luke. 1.

Prouer. 16.

After what
sort Moses is
sayde to be
the deliuerer
of the people.

thinke and speake so reuerently of the ministerie & vertues of the Saints, that yet we leaue Iesus Christes honor whole to hymselfe, who onely hath the preheminentie in all those thinges, that concerne the true worshyping of God, and meane of our saluation.

First, he begynneth with the office of Moses, which was the most excellent thing, that he could deuise. For he sayth, that God sent him, to be a ruler and deliuerer of the people of Israel. Thys thing he so proponeth, that he hytteth them agayne in the fath, with the ingratitude of their fathers, which vntworthily refused Moses, laying to their charge, how they contemned him, in whome they so greatly bragged. For he sayth: Thys Moses whome they denyed, saying, who made thee a Ruler, and a Iudge, the same did God sende, to be a ruler and a deliuerer by the hand of the Aungel. &c. Nowe, because he acknowledged Moses to be a ruler and deliuerer of the people of God, thys one thing might haue bene sufficient prooue ynough, agaynst his aduersaries, which complained on him, as hauing spoken blasphemie, agaynst Moses.

We haue here chiefly to consider, howe God maketh him the ruler and deliuerer of hys people, who was already hated of the Egyptians, refused of hys bretherne the Israelites, and had a long time bene in banishment. By which example we learne, that we should not iudge, neyther of our owne case, nor other mennes, according to the iudgement of the worlde: where oftentimes it falleth out, that they are in greatest fauour with God, whome the worlde contemptuously abhorreth and disdaineth. For thys is Gods propertie, to chuse the humble and base, and by them to confounde the pryde of the worlde. And we reade in the hundred and. xiiij. Psalme, how God taketh vp the simple out of the dust, and lyfteth the poore out of the mire, that he may set him with the Princes, euen with the princes of his people. Whereunto that that the holy Virgin singeth is lyke: He hath put downe the mightie from their seate, & hath exalted the humble and mecke. Examples hereof we haue not onely in Moses, but also in dyuers others. So, God of an Affekeeper, made Saule a king, and Dauid he toke from the shep- folde, and set hym vp in a Princely throne. Whereunto may also be refer- red, that that was done in the Apostles, who being for the more part fy- shermen, and of no authoritie in the worlde, were aduanced so high, that they might be called conquerors of the whole world, which by preaching of the worlde, they brought to the obersance of Christ, within fewe yeres. Here may they that are despyed, and wpythout glozy, receyue comfort. Also they that be aloft and in hye degree, may learne to be humble, least presump- tion (as Salomon sayth) go before destruction.

Furthermore, let vs see in what respect Moses is called the deliuerer of the people. For thys is not so to be vnderstanded, as though he dyd anye thing of his owne priuate power or authoritie: For Steuen plainly testifieth, that he was sent to be a deliuerer, by the hande of the Aungell, which ap- peared to him in the bushe: that is, that he did all that belonged to the deli- uerie of the people, by the appoyntment and commaundement of Iesus Christ, whome in the last sermon, we declared to be the Aungell. It is ma- nifest therefore, that Moses was but a Minister, and that all the glozye of their deliuerie is due onely to Christ. After which sense, all the places of Scripture, must be taken and expounded, wherein anye thing peculyer vnto

unto God, is attributed to man, for that is after none other sort, but by the waie of Ministerie, which they take in hande, at the commaundement of God. So it is sayde, the Ministers plant, buyde, wyne men unto God, remyt sinnes, and haue them breuitted, not bicause they doe these thinges of their owne power, and at their pleasure; but bicause God doth vouchsafe to vse their ministerie, in bringing them to passe, who also euen wythout them, at his pleasure, is able to rule and gouerne all things.

But bicause he sayde Moses was made the Ruler and deliuerer of the people of God, he sheweth howe he vsed his office: He brought them forth, shewing wonders and signes in Aegypt, and in the redde sea, and in the wyldernes, fortie yeares. So that Scenen acknowledgeth in Moses no bare name of a deliuerer onely, but willingly confesseth that he faithfully discharged and fulfilled his office. And bicause he would seme to couceale nothing that made for his glory, he maketh mention of the signes and wonders, which God wrought by him. These wonders and signes be deuised into thre sortes, and are diligently set out in Moses wytyngs.

The first sort of them is those, that were done in Egypt, amongst which, those are first to be placed, which he wrought to purchase a credite to his vocation, such as was the turning of his rodde into a Serpent; which Serpent did eate by the Sorcerers rodde; which they by enchauntment had transformed into Serpents. Then followed the ten horrible and prodigious plagues, wherewith God maruailously afflicted Pharao and the Egyptians. For all the Egyptians waters were turned into bloud; and were made not onely vnyt for any vse, but also bphoyded the Egyptians with their bloody tyranny and babeslaughter. Then were there frogges sent, which not onely in their fieldes, but also crawling in their houses, with their troublesome noise bered their guiltie consciences. After them followed Lice, more troublesome than the frogges; bicause they sticke fast vnto their bodies, eating into their fleshe. By and by after that, came dryers swarmes of flies, by heapes bering both men and beastes. And bicause thys might perhaps seme but sleahtyngs and tryfles, they had yet more greiuous than thys sent among them. For an horrible and contagious rotte of murthen kylled by their cattle both small and great. In the mennes bodies rose filthy botches and sores vgly running. Monstrous hayle destroyed their whole yeares crop and increase. And that the hayle touched not, or sprong afterwarde out of the grounde, againe the Caterpillers deuoured lying in their fieldes, as thicke as hayle. And bycause wyttingly and wyllingly they persisted in their blinde and wilful ignorance of God, he sent among them fearefull and feebleable darkenesse. And at length, by an Aungell that strake them, all Egypt was fylled with the slaughter of all their first borne, so that no house was horde of this horrible calamitie and mourning. The consideration of all which teacheth vs howe easie it is vnto God, to keepe downe and banquish; most mightie Tyrants. For he is in deede the Lorde of hostes, which vseth to send forth as well the good Aungels as badde, yea and all the creatures of the world, against his enimies. And there is no creature so byle or weake, which is not able ynough to bere, yea and to kill man, if it please God to arme it therevnto. By his iustice and iudgement it came to passe, that Pharao was so troubled with frogges, and so bered with swarmes of Lice and flies,

2. Moses ful-
filleth the of-
fice of a des-
iguerer.

Moses mys-
takes in E-
gypt.

who not long before, had proudly relected the God of the Hebrewes. So by this he reuenged the wicked contempt of his name, amonge the Whilistines, when they had gotten the Ark of God into their handes, which was a sacrament and signe of his presence. And we reade how Antiochus, Sylla, Herode, and diuers other were eaten vp of Lice and vermine that bredde of their owne fleshe. Let vs therefore humble our selues in the sight of God, and not like mad men suffer our selues to be bewitched with the vaine hope and confidence of things temporall.

The miracle
of the red sea.

The seconde sorte of myracles wrought by Moyses, were those which came to passe in the red sea. For when the Israelites were inclosed with the chariots and horsemen of the Egyptians, and thought they must needs perishe, eyther vpon their swordes, or else be swallowed vp of the scourges of the sea, sodainly the sea stricken with Moyses rodde as God commaunded, deuyded it selfe in two parts lyke a walles standing on both sides, and the winde blowing roughly dyed vpper the myerie fourde, that the Israelites went throughe the middle of the sea on drye foote, whome when the Egyptians with deadly hatred pursued, sodainly the heapes of waters ioyned together agayne, and oppressed and swallowed them vp. By which myracle God evidently taught vs that he is able to helpe his people by those things which seme to them most hurtfull and agaynst them, and that he can giue them a passage to escape throughe the middle of all the thinges that lye in their waye, that wilke in hys vocation. Agayne, he bleth to punishe his enemies by those thinges in which they haue their most hope and affiaunce: yea, he can blinde their eyes, and sende them the spirite of gyddinesse, that they shall runne into their owne gilschiese, and not be able to auoyde the dangers lying before their face. For it is certayne, the Egyptians took the redde sea for a sure bulwarke, and thought that the Israelites, their wiues and children shoulde perishe therein: yet Gods prouidence so ordreth all thinges, that the Israelites passe safely throughe, both body and goodes, and the Egyptians be drowned, and of their owne heade enter into the middle of the sea, betwene the two mayne walles of water, notwithstanding they had so often before felt Gods heauye hande. Whereby we learne that we shoulde despayre in no aduersitie, nor put any trust or confidence in outward thinges, bycause God is able so quickly to turne all thinges by side downe.

The myra-
cles in the
desert.

In the thirde sort, Steven comprehendeth those that were done in the wilderness, where the people had Manna giuen vnto them, which fedde them fourtie yeares together, where Quayles fell rounde about their tentes, where Moyses opened the veines of quicke springs out of the hard rockes, where by godly prayer he gate a glorious victorie of the Amalechites: where God marueylously defeated the Neghtes of Balaam: where the wicked murmurers perished with strange plagues: where their garments in fourtie yeares space, neyther consumed with wearing, neyther dyd rotte for oldenesse. I omit diuers other thinges, which by Moyses are more diligently rehearsed. But seeing Steven so willingly acknowledgeth all these thinges, and so highly commendeth them, he abundantly declareth that they doe him no small iniurie to accuse him as a contemner of Moyses. And because he sendeth the Israelites from Moyses to Christ, he evidently sheweth that all these signes serued but to confirme Moyses doctrine, and ought

not

not to be racked, to the ende to cause the people to depende and hang upon Moyses. And they are confuted by this place, which abuse the myracles wrought sometime by the Saintes, to prove the superstitious inuocating and worshipping of them, whereas they bare witness but of their doctrine, whereby we were brought vnto Christ. And because he was not ignorant that his aduersaries chiefely baged him with this arginment, that he ledde his hearers by this doctrine from the ceremonies of the lawe vnto Christ, and the beliefe in him: he proueth that he doth not so in contempt of Moyses, but according to his example and commaundement. For this is that Moyses (sayeth he) which sayde vnto the children of Israel: A Prophete shall the Lorde your God raise vnto you of your brethern lyke vnto me, him shall you heare. Whereupon he gathereth, that it was not Moyses meaning, that the Jewes shoulde sticke in the ceremonies giuen by him, but that he promised them another prophete, whose sayings they must all hearken vnto, or else perishe both body and soule. This prophete was Christ, whom the Scripture calleth the Prince of all Prophets, & by whose spirite all other Prophets were inspired. Also he beatech backe their accusation of his contemning of Moyses vpon their owne heades, whyle he sheweth that they refuse Iesus Christ, whome Moyses so earnestly and with such authoritie commended. The place is in the .xxiiij. of Deuteronomie, vpon the explication whereof, we haue spoken more largely in the .xxiiij. Sermon, where we expounded the same place in Peters sermon, which brought the same text. Let vs learne that it is God the fathers will, that we shoulde heare Christ, and be obedient vnto him by true obedience of fayth, and so obteyne saluation in him: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory for ever. Amen.

1. Pet. 1.

The.ij. Homelie.

This is he that was in the congregation in the wilderness, with the Angell which spake to him in the Mount Sina, and with our fathers. This man receiued the worde of life to giue vnto vs, to whome our fathers would not obey, but cast it from them, and in their hearts turned backe agayne into Aegypt, saying vnto Aaron, make vs Gods to go before vs. For as for this Moyses that brought vs out of the lande of Aegypt, wee wote not what is become of him. And they made a Calse in those dayes, and offered sacrifice vnto the ymage, and reioyced ouer the workes of their owne handes.



Because the Jewes had all the trust of their saluation in outwarde ceremonies, and glozped in keeping the fayth of their auncesters and forefathers: they accused all those which taught men to seeke saluation in Christ onely, of great blasphemie both agaynst God, agaynst Moles, and the fathers. This Steuen founde true, as befoze we haue declared: who for that he would the more easlye clere himselfe hereof, breaketh forth into the prayse of Moyses, greatly extolling him and declaring how vntworthily their fathers intreated him. The ende of all which is to laye the crime wherewith they charged him, both vpon their fathers, in whome they so greatly glozped, and

1. The lawe
giuen by
Moses.

Exo. 20. 24

Num. 12.

1. Cor. 15.
2. Cor. 3.
Leuit. 18.

Galat. 3.

Rom. 7. 8.
Moses deli-
uereth the
precepts he

and also upon themselves which stubbornly refused Christ, of whome he sheweth that Moses bare witness. Moreover, he gathereth hereof that the fathers were saved through none of their desertes, but by the mere mercy of God; and that therefore they ought to put their hope and trust in none other. The same is the ende also of this present place, where first he rehearseth the setting forth of the lawe, whereof Moses was the minister: afterwarde he declareth the heynous trespasses of their fathers, in offending both agaynst Moses, and the lawe of God.

And in speaking of the setting forth of the lawe, he maketh mention of two other things, which were able to purchase no small credit vnto Moses. First he sayth: he was in the congregation with the fathers in the wilderness. In these wordes he comprehendeth fourtie yeares space: wherein he suffered with so great fayth and patience, the Nation of the Jewes, that there is to be founde in no histories any to be compared with him. This is an argument of a singular fayth, which coulde be overcome by no terrors, by no continuall labours, nor by no unkindenesse of the people, but would stoutly go forth with the charge giuen him of God. The seconde is, that he sayth he spake with the Angel, which both appeared to him before, and afterwarde was familiarly conuersant with him; when he appoynted him to be Gods interpreter to the people. We declared before out of Paule, that this Angel was Christ. Wherefore Moses dignitie is here declared to be such, as wherein he excelled all the prophetes of all ages. For thus we reade God sayde: If there be a Prophet of the Lordes among you, I will be knowne of him in a vision, and will speake vnto him in sleepe. My seruant Moses is not so, which is faythfull in all my house. Vnto him will I speake mouth to mouth. These things steuen calleth to their remembraunce, to make them vnderstande howe great the authoritie of Moses and the Oracles which God gaue by him, ought to haue bene both with the fathers in time passed, and ought now also to be with them. And to that ende he afterwarde addeth: This man receiued the worde of lyfe to giue vnto vs. And it is not without a cause that he calleth the lawe the word of lyfe. For so he purgeth himselfe from all cyme of condemning the lawe, and setteth forth in one word the effect of the lawe. For truly the lawe is a liuely worde or the worde of lyfe, although otherwheres Paule calleth it the strength of sinne, and ministerie or working of death. For it teacheth vs the rule howe to liue holily, and promisseth lyfe to all them that fulfill the same. Next, it leadeth men vnto Christ, in whome all the meane of saluation, yea, and very life it selfe is conteyned. For the which cause Paule resemblith it to a scholemayster. And Moses sayth he had set lyfe before the Jewes, bicause he had shewed them in the lawe the true way howe to attayne vnto lyfe. And these things it becometh vs to acknowledge in the lawe, if we will rightly iudge therof. But if we compare the corruption of our nature with it, it may worthily be called, the strength of sinne, & ministry of death. For it bewraith sinne, which otherwise lurketh in vs, unknowne, and witnesseth that we haue deserued death. Furthermore, it teacheth vs, that we are so weake, that we are not able to fulfill the righteousnesse therof, nor of our owne power and merites to escape the wrath of God. But of these things Paule entreateth at large.

We ought well to marke howe he sayth, that Moses deliuered not to the Israelytes the deuyles of his owne bryne, but the worde of lyfe which

he

he receyued of God. Which thing it appeareth he performed with such diligence, that without the certaine and expresse word of God, he neuer durst institute or decree anything in doubtfull matters: as we may see in the case of the blasphemers, and of the man that brake the Sabbath daye, and of those which being polluted with touching of dead carcases, myght not come to the pasche feast with the congregation. And that that Moses obserued, that same the Prophetes and Apostles in time past were commaunded also to obserue, that they should teach nothing of their owne head, vnder colour of Gods name, but shoulde diligently set forth the worde of God, speaking in the scriptures. So God putteth his wordes into Hieremies mouth, and commaundeth Ezechiel to take the worde at his mouth that he should shew vnto the people. And the Apostles are commaunded to teache all Nations the things which before, they had learned of Christ. If they which bragge of their succeeding the Apostles, had with like diligence obserued the same, we shoulde haue in the Church more true godlynesse and fayth, and lesse error and superstition. And if we consider Moses, the Prophetes, and Apostles, we shall finde the boldenesse of the Popes of Rome to be detestable, which arrogate to themselves power to make new lawes and newe Articles of faith, through whose licentious lust it is come to passe, that the yoke of the christians is more grievous & burthenous than the yoke of the Jewes.

Secondly, it is to be obserued how Steuen testifieth that the lawe was not giuen to the fathers lining onely in Moses time, but also vnto their posteritie: yea, he includeth himselfe and all others, that had nowe professed Christ in the number, to whome it was giuen. By which place the error of them is manifestly confuted, which thinke the things done by Moses and the Prophetes according to Gods appoyntment, belong only vnto the fathers. Howbeit, it is euident that God is everlasting and vnchangeable. And therefore his will must needes be alwayes one vnchangeable. And it maketh no matter though manye things be abrogated which sometime were appoynted for the olde fathers. For they ought to haue remayned but vntill a time of correction, and to be resemblaunces and shadowes of those things, the verity whereof was to be fulfilled in Christ. And in those things consisted not the worshipping of God, which ought to be spirituall, because God is a spirit. In the meane time the true points of faith & religion, which were first declared in the beginning of the world, and more fully afterwarde set forth by Moses and the Prophetes, remayne safe and sounde: wherevnto the Prophete had a respect, saying: The worde of the Lorde endureth for euer. And Christ sayth, the worlde shall peryshe, but one tytle of the lawe shall not perishe. Let no man therfore beguile himselfe through any false hope, as though the things deliuered to the fathers in time past were not also spoken to vs, seeing our fayth, lyfe, and all our dedes, must be tryed and examined according to the rule of the olde lawe.

But let vs retorne vnto Steuen, whiche setteth agaynst the publication of the lawe, the ingratitude and naughtynesse of the fathers; vniustly reflecting Moses and the lawe. And although he myght haue recyted diuers other naughty dedes of theirs, yet bringeth he but the sinne of Idolatrie onely, whereby it appeareth plainly, of howe small authoritie Gods lawe was with them, when contrary to his commaundement, they durst make an ymage of God, and appoynt newe kyndes of worshipping him, whereas

not

receyued of
God.Leuit. 24.
Num. 15. 9Hierem. 1.
Ezech. 3.
Math. 23.The lawe gi-
uen also for
them that
came after.

Iohn. 4.

Esay. 40.
Math. 5.2. The he re-
noueselle of
Idolatrie.
Exodus. 32.

not many dayes before, they had heard the terrible force of his diuine maiestie. The storie is in Exodus the xxij. cha. Scors warke and ende here: it is to proue that the fathers were alwayes confitours of Moses, and that they present, truly trode in the steppes of their forwardnesse: therefore as the fathers in olde time were saued by grace onely: so there was none other hope of saluation for them, than such as was founded vpon the grace of God. It shall profite vs diligently to consider these fewe wordes, wherein this heynous disobedience is comprehended, bicause they cunningly paynt out vnto vs the begynnings and proceedings of Idolatrye.

The begin-
nings, and go-
ing forwarde
of ydolatrie.

First, declaring the fountayne of all this euill, he sayth that the fathers would not obey the liuely worde of Gods lawe, but in their heart returned into Egypt. And by the name of Egypt, he comprehendeth the abhominable superstition which raigned in that Nation, wherupon he sayth they set their myndes againe. And in this he noteth the execrable leuitie and inconstancie of them, which had so soone forgotten, both their grievous seruitude and bondage, and their wonderfull deliuerie, and would now imitate and folow them, whose names they ought in their hartes to haue abhorred.

i. Contempt
of the worde.

This is the fountayne of all vngodlynnesse, when in our hearts we turne from the worde of God, to the presidents and examples of men, and studie more to please them, than God. Forthence springeth that detestable vnsustainability, which maketh vs not onely to forget the lawe of God, but quite putteth out of our remembraunce, all the thrall and bondage that before tyme we haue bene in. We haue examples hereof in these dayes euerywhere of them, who to please the worlde, followe the superstitionnesse thereof: and the intollerable yokes of Antichristianitie, wherewith before they were oppressed, they extenuate and make very light of, bicause they will not seeme to doe wickedly altogether.

ii. Contempt
of the Ministers
of God.

But after the contempt of Gods lawe, followeth the contempt of Moses, which they manifestly expresse in these wordes, where they saye: As for this Moses which brought vs out of the lande of Egypt, we wote not what is become of him. They confesse then the benefite they receyued by Moses meane, but of him they wote not what is befallen. Yet they sawe him goe vnto the mountaine at Gods calling; he also bade them, to abyde his comynge. He appoynted them Hur and Aaron, to be his byreres and delegates. Yet as though they had bene left doubtfull and vncertaine of all things, they dare to complayne them. Wherby it appeareth that Moses authoritie was very small with them, seeing they coude wickedly cast the lawe of God from them. So alwayes where men in their hartes contempne the worde of God, it bleseth to breede the contempt, and lothing of Gods Ministers. For where Sathan knoweth that God hath set them as labourers and watchmen, through whose admonitions, we be kept eyther in doing well, or else be brought into the waye when we doe erre: he labourerth onely how to discredite them, and to bring them out of authoritie wyth men. And this place teacheth vs what to iudge of them which vse to scoffe and rayle at the Ministers of the worde. Surely, by that argument they proue they are the despylers of God and his worde, although they neuer so much denye the same. For as he bleseth not to contempne the Legate or Ambasadour, which honoureth the Prince that sent him: so if they

had

had not learned to let God light, they could not contempne his mynisters
 and Negaters. Of these fountaynes beganne Idolatrie to spring. For while they
 saye they wote not what is become of Moyses, by and by they adde: Make
 us a Goddes to go before vs. Shall we thinke that they were become so madde
 as to iudge Goddes could be made by the handes of men: No. But they
 woulde haue some visible signe or token of Gods presence, whereby they
 might be assured of Gods present helpe, and whereunto they might direct
 the ceremonies of their outward seruice and worshipping. And because
 they had once swarued from the worde, to the denyle of mans reason, they
 cause a golden Calfe to be molten, following the Egyptians, who worship-
 ped Apis their God in fourme of a Calfe, wherein they commit manifold
 errour. For first they doubt of the presence of God, whose many and no-
 table signes they had hitherto sene. And now they neyther remember the
 wonders which he shewed in Egypt and in the redde sea: neyther regard
 they the pillar of clowde and fire that went before their campe, neyther are
 they mindefull of the dreadfull Maiestie that appeared in the mounte of
 Sinai. Next, contrarie to the commaundment of God, they make a mol-
 ten Image, wherein they go about to expresse the fourme or shape of God,
 and (as the Prophet sayth) tourne the Maiestie of their God, into the simi-
 litude of a Calfe, that eateth haye. Therefore they doe God extreme disho-
 nour, and make new Goddes while they imagine God to be a farre other
 manner of one than in verde he is. This is the next step to Idolatrie, when
 men are not contented with suche meanes, as it pleased God to reueale
 himselfe by, but dare of their owne heades deuise newe meanes. God re-
 uealeth himselfe by his worde and Sacraments, by the frame and worke-
 manship of this worlde, and by his creatures, in all which there appeare
 euident tokens of his godlye wisdom, goodnesse, iustice, and omnipoten-
 cie. And to the intent that we seeing these thinges, might be stirred by with
 the consideration of God and true godlynesse, there is nothing almost con-
 teyned in this worlde, but the holy ghost hath taken parables out of them,
 whereby he shadoweth out the mysteries of God and our saluation. Ther-
 fore our eyes on euery side beholde Images consecrated by the worde of
 God, to admonishe vs of our dutie. Whosoever despyle these Images and
 follow the reason of the fleshe, they can not chiose but be polluted with the
 vice of Idolatrie. For that that herein came to passe vnto the Jewes, we
 reade the same also fell out among the Gentyles. And that the Idolatry a-
 mong the christians sprang of the same cause, is more euident than needeth
 long profe. Furthemoze, we are taught howe requisite it is, that from
 our childehoode we be well instructed in religion, seeing the Israelites after
 so many myracles sene, and hearing the worde of God, fall agayne to that
 kinde of Idolatrie, that they were vsed to in Egypt.

After thys newe God, foloweth worshipping. Wherefore he sayth, They
 offred sacrifice vnto the Calfe. Nowbeit, they woulde seme to haue offered
 to the true God, that brought them out of the lande of Egypt. For they
 make mention of the true God, and Aaron as we reade proclaymed an ho-
 ly day, to the Lorde. But because this Calfe was neyther true God, nor
 the Image of God (for who will say God is like vnto a Calfe) they truly
 are sayde to haue done sacrifice to the Calfe. Here therefore thou hast what

id. Actes
Goddess.

Psal. 106.

+ JoH

Rom. 1.

16. Wor-
shipping of
Idolles.

to answer them, which under a stone of godly zeale, thinke worshipping of Images may be excused: and saye, that whatsoeuer we doe in the honour of hym, is acceptable vnto hym, although we sometime straye from the rule of his worde. But the holy ghost speaking by Sierus, is of a fauer rather vnde and opinion: For all this worshipping resteth in the Images, and stretcheth not vnto God, whose similitude they represent not, for how should Idols represent God, which is the truth itself, which Idols or Images, the Prophet calleth lying Schoolemaysters. And if thou wilt say, this worship stretcheth yet further: I will confesse, it is done in dede to the deity, who is both the father of Ihesus, and onely delighted in Ihesus. Thus saue Paule, when in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the twelfth chapter, he wrote: The thinges that the Gentiles offer, they offer to Devils, and not to God. Thus quoth Sierus, God is not to be worshipped with such things.

Habacuc. 2

b. Reioycing
of Idolaters.

Hos. 4.

Beside all this, they reioyced in the workes of their owne handes. And these wordes is expressed partly a trust of minde, and ioye that springeth thereof, both which ought to be sought in God onely: and partly a kinde of outward reioyning, whereinto idolaters be to fall without all modestie or measure. The holpe historie sheweth that both these things came to passe in this place. For as soon as the Calfe was molten and grauen, with a great shout they cry: These be thy Gods (O Israel) which brought thee out of the lande of Aegypt. Then being filled with the fleshe offered to the Idoll, they rise up to play. This is the propertie of Idolaters. For Idols rob men of their hearts, as the Prophet sayth. So it cometh to passe, that they which should reioyce in God onely, reioyce in Idols, and where they ought to be ledde and gouerned with the spirite of God, they rage in immoderate and vnseasonable pastimes. Nowe, if thou wilt compare the things hitherto spoken, with that is done in the Papacie or Popedome, thou shalt see them all one. For what other beginning canst thou alleage of ydolatrie, but that men leaue the worde of God, and turne agayne in their hartes, to the abominations of the Jewes and Idolaters, from whence through the benefite of God, they were deliuered. This appeareth well, in that dyuers of our doings, agree with the rites and ceremonies both of the Jewes, and Gentiles. By and by, after contempt of the worde, followed the contempt of the ministerie, which the ignorance and blockheadnesse of the prestes greatly set forward, which sent the simple people to dumbe ymages, there to learne what belonged to their saluation. Of these springes, which out of newe Goddes, some like men, some like women, some like olde men, some like yong. Yea, beside the fourmes of men, were added fourefooted beasts, fowles of the ayre, wormes of the earth, and fishes of the sea. I let passe the gally fourmes and lightes of souldyours, the whorish prauing and decking of Images, which should haue represented the lykenesse of saints, and of God hymselfe. But newe Goddes must haue newe wayes and maners of worshipping. Therefore in the honor of them were temples buylded, alters consecrated, offerings hanged by, pilgrimages appoynted, lampes burning, holpe dayes proclaymed, sacrifices offered, and nothing was left vndone, which heretofore was vsed in the sacrifice of the Gentyles. And, as though men had bene cleane eased of the burthen of theyr sinnes, they greatly reioyced in the workes of their owne handes. And there wanted not libertie of carnall ioyes, which neuer raigned more than

in the feastes and dedications of these Goddes. So grieuous & great was the blyndenes, from the which God hath deliuered vs by the light of his gospel. Let vs therfore hereafter flee the inuencions of our owne witte, and the workes of our owne handes. Let vs serue God the father of our Lorde Jesus Christ in spirite and in truth: to whome be prayse, honoꝝ, power and gloꝝy. Amen.

The.lij.Homelie.

Then God turned himselfe and gaue them vp that they shoulde worshippe the hoste of the skie, as it is written in the booke of the Prophetes: o ye of the house of Israell, gaue yee to mee sacrifices and meate offerings by the space of fourtie yeares in the wilderness? And you tooke vnto you the Tabernacle of Moloch, and the starre of your God Rempham, figures which ye made to worship them. Therefore I will translate you beyonde Babylon.



Amongst many other things which Jesus Christ foretold should come to passe to þe faythfull Preachers of hys Gospel, this is not the least that he sayde the worlde shoulde persecute them, as publike enemies of true religion. This thing we see the Apostles founde true, euen in the first springth of the church, and among them Steuen chiefly, who while he goeth about to bring men vnto Christ, is accused, for that he had spoken blasphemy agaynst God, Moses, the lawe, and all the ceremonies thereof. But he both boldly and wisely aunswereth these shamelesse scaunders, rehearsing the auncient religion, whereby the fathers were saued, and diligently expounding the things done by Moses, declaring howe he receyued this worde of lyfe, of God, and deliuered it vnto the fathers. He sheweth mozeouer, that the fathers were neuer obedient to Gods commaundements, but being addicted to outward ceremonies onely, feyned diuers things of their owne bzaine, contrary to true religion. And by this meane he goeth about to put out of their minds, the bayne trust which they had in their fathers religion, which is the molste dangerous impediment and let, that can be, to them that would come to the right waye of saluation. To this ende therfore he recyted the hystorie of the golden Calfe, whereby he conuinceth their fathers of great vngodlynesse, shewing that they were saued of more fauour, seeing they deserued destruction thzough that wicked Idolatry only. And he adiopneth here vnto this present place verie handsomely, declaring that they alone sinned not herein, but proueth that their posteritie followed their steppes.

The rehearsing of the Idolatry of their posterity, seemeth to be as it were a preoccupation. For thence he preuenteth them, if any man shoulde make lyght of þe erecting this calfe, or should say that it were long ago expiated by the godlynesse of their successors. For there is no excuse left for them, because they were so lyttle the better, after their first fall, that it rather increased whole heapes of impietie following. For where they had once throwne awaye the worde of God, and rushed into their owne destruction with myndes bent to vngodlynesse, God which before tenderly fauoured them, tur-

The Idolatry of the Israelites is of continuance

1. Reg. 11.

1. Reg. 12. 13

1. Reg. 16.

2. Para. 25.

2. Para. 28.

2. Reg. 21.

Esay. 6.

Roma 1.

neth his back to them, and giueth them ouer into a reprobate sense, to wor-
 ship all the hoste of the skye, and with greedynesse to followe all maner su-
 perstition of the Gentyles. And in these fewe wordes, Steuen briefly com-
 prehendeth all that euer they afterwarde did, agaynst the lawes of God.
 For Salomon the first beginner of this euill, for his wyues sakes, that were
 Alianthes and straungers, builded Temples vnto diuers Gods of the Sy-
 donians, Moabites, Ammonites, and other Nations. Ieroboam after that,
 brought in againe the superstitious worshipping of Calues. Achab brought
 in the honouring of Baal. Amasias of a madde counsell and deuyse setteth vp
 the Goddes of the Idumeans whome he had banquished, to be worshipped.
 Achaz was deliyed with the Gods and religion of the Asirians. At length
 Manasses following, which farre passed all the wickednesse of his forefa-
 thers, brought into Iurie whatsoever superstition or ydolatrie was to be
 founde any where among the Gentyles, and by force defended those religi-
 ons, agaynst the true worshippers of God, insomuch that we reade, Hie-
 rusalem was filled with the bloude of the Saintes. Whose impietie tooke so
 deepe roote, that it coulde not be wholly plucked vp agayne in Iosias dayes,
 as the sermons of Ieremie and Sophonie abundantly declare. And least any
 man might marueyle, howe these things came to passe, after God had gi-
 uen them his lawe, he sayth they were iustlye forsaken of God, and giuen
 vp into a reprobate minde, and vtterly blinded. And that this was the iust
 iudgement of God, may easily be gathered of the things before going. For
 their vngodlynesse and vnthankfulnesse deserued the same, whom neyther
 the worde of God, nor infinite other thinges, whereby it pleased God to
 reueale himselfe vnto them, coulde keepe in doing their dutie. They were
 worthy therefore, that euen seeing, they shoulde be blinde, hearing, they
 shoulde be deafe, and shoulde be hardened in their harts, as God threatneth
 by his Prophete. Yet may we see in other Nations lyke examples of Gods
 iudgementes. Paule affirmeth the same of the Gentyles superstition. And
 would to God we sawe not the lyke, euen among them that glorie in the
 name of Christians. For after they had banished the authoritie of Gods
 worde from them, and that it lyked them to learne rather of dumbe yma-
 ges, than of the liuely worde of god, then ranne they on so farre in super-
 stition, that the very Jewes and Turkes laughed at them. And here com-
 meth to my remembrance that notable saying of a Turkishe Ambassador,
 who being in the Court of a great Christian Prince, and being asked why
 the Turkes so abhorred the Christian religion, and coulde not be induced
 to beleue in it: answered, that no man being in his right witte coulde a-
 looue or lyke that religion, which worshipped those for Goddes that were
 inferiour, and of lesse power, than they that worshipped them. And what he
 ment therby, he after declared by our breaiden god, and by the Idols which
 were worshipped in Churches, which being made by those that worship-
 ped them, did proue sufficiently (sayde he) that the religion was prepos-
 terous, and contrary to common sense and reason. These thinges Christian
 Princes knowe, the Bishops and people in generall: yet no man is grie-
 ued at the great iniurie thereby done vnto Christ, so that wise men are not
 without a cause afrayde, that many euen in our dayes also are giuen vpe
 into reprobate mindes.

This place teacheth vs also, that no man can holde the right waye in
 religi-

religion, except he be first guided by the hande and spirite of God. For the naturall man perceyueth not the thinges belonging to the spirite of God. For no man cometh to Christ, except the father drawe him. And for because he draweth by his worde, we must studie the same. For whosoever make light thereof, and cast it fro them, make themselves unworthy of the grace of God. Wherefore God turneth his backe vpon them, and wrappeth them in darkenesse, deuoyde of all light and truth. Therefore it behoueth vs to haue a diligent care of the worde, and so to depende vpon the same, that being entred into the ryght waye, we swarue neyther to the right hande nor to the left.

And least any man should be so impudent, as to denye that the fathers thus did, Steuen alleageth a testimonie of the Prophete Amos, written in the .vi. chap. There the Lord accuseth the people of Israel, as well for many other vices, as for this, that they abode not sincerely in his worde. And that the heynousnesse of their sinne might the more appeare, and that all men might see howe God doth not expostulate with them, without a cause, he sheweth that this is an olde impietie, begun sometime in the wilderness, and afterwarde so increasing, that it is become incurable, and can not be taken awaye, but with the destruction of the whole nation. It shall make much for our instruction, if we diligently consider euerye thing that is here sayde.

First, he speaketh of the disobedience and wickednesse of the fathers in the wilderness, in these wordes: Gaue yee to me sacrifices and meate offerings, by the space of fourtie yeares in the wilderness, o ye of the house of Israel? By asking the question, he fortifieth his saying, and denyeth that the fathers gaue any sacrifices to him for fourtie yeres long. And yet it appeareth they built a Tabernacle, according as God had appointed, and Alters vpon the which they offred all kinds of sacrifices vnto God, which brought them out of the lande of Egypt. But God denyeth that thing to be done in the honour of him, that is done for any other ende than he appointeth. For God appoynted that the ende of all their outward ceremonies, shoulde be resemblances of the Sauour that was promysed, and that they shoulde admonish them of their dutie, as well in fayth and religion, as in the whole conuersation of their lyfe. But they forgetting this, were occupied in y bare ceremonies, and thought that by them, they satisfied God, and purged their sinnes. Whereby it came to passe, that they abused all their Leuiticals, for a cloke and colour of licentiousnesse and wickednesse. Therefore God worthily refuseth all this worshipping, and sayeth it belonged not to him. And there be also other places of Scripture, wherein he constantly affirmeth the same, and sheweth that the obseruation of those things, which he so diligently prescribeth in the lawe, is not profitable. Looke Psalm. 50. Esay. 1. and. 43. Mich. 6. Hoseas. 6. Yea, when he sawe that they glozied in their circumcision, hauing no respect to the spirituall circumcision, he cryeth out that their circumcision is not auayleable. We are taught therefore by this place, that all that worshipping is in bayne, which is not done to that ende that God hath appoynted it. For it can not be that without the obedience of fayth, any kinde of worship can please God. But where the worde of God is neglected, ther e remaineth no place for faith or obedience: therfore they are but as vncleane and prophane things, whatsoeuer they doe, although

1. Cor. 2.
Iohn. 6.

Deut. 4. 12

2 place in 2
mo 3 the .v. ch.

Ierem. 4.

Heb. 11.

out

Esay. 29.
Math. 15.

The wor-
shipping of
Moloch.

The God
Rempham.

outwardly they appeare agreeable with the worde of God. What shall we then say of those ceremonies, which stande onely vpon mannes authoritie, and tradition: the Lord long ago with one word hath utterly ouerthrowne them, saying: they worship me in vaine, teaching doctrines of men. Euery plant which my heauenly father hath not planted, shall be pulled vppe by the rootes.

The Lorde holding on in repeating the sinnes of the Israelites, rehearseth what their posteritie did, after they were in possession of the lande of Chanaan: you tooke vnto you the Tabernacle of Moloch, and the Starre of your God Rempham, figures which you made to worshippinge them. He comprehendeth all sortes of Idolatrie vnder thre kinde.

The first was the worshipping of Moloch, which as it appeareth by the actes of Salomon, who first builded a Temple to him, was the God of the Ammonites. And it seemeth he was the God called on at mennes natiuities or byrthes, in the honour of whome, infantes were sacrificed in fire, as Manasse did, which sacrificed his sonne in fire. God had appoynted death for the punishment of this wickednesse, as is declared Leuiticus. 20. in these wordes: Whosoever hee be of the children of Israel, or of the straungers that dwell in Israel, that giueth of his seede vnto Moloch, let him be slayne, the people of the lande shall stone him. And I will set my face agaynst that manne, and will destroye him from among his people, bicause hee hath giuen of his seede vnto Moloch, for to defyle my sanctuarie, and to pollute my holye name. And though that the people of the land hyde their eyes from the man that giueth of his seede vnto Moloch, and kill him not: I will put my face agaynst that man, and agaynst his kindred, and will destroye him, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredome with Moloch, from among their people. And yet coulde not the authoritie of this seuer inhibition, be of such weyght, but that this wicked kinde of sacrificing was common, as easily maye appeare by the prophetic of Ieremie in the. xxxij. Chap.

The seconde kynde of Idolatrie was the worshipping of a Starre, that was consecrated to a God called Rempham, of whom we read nothing of certainty. Some thinke it to be y Planet of Saturne, some of Venus, some of Mars. In deepe the worshipping of starres was vled amongst all Nations, bicause the marueylous course of them, the brightnesse and fourme of them, easily perswaded the simpler sort of men, that there was some godheade in them. And hereto are to be referred those places of Scripture, where it is sayde the Jewes worshipped the holste of heauen. We haue here to consider that the worshipping of Starres consisteth not only in adoration and sacrifices, which were sometime vled among the Gentyles, but also that they worship them, which thinke the successe of warres, peace, famine, plentie, sickenesse, tempestes, and such lyke thinges depende of them. For it is manifest, that all these things be gouerned by the rules of gods prouidence, whose iudgements are not tied vnto the Starres, but are ordred by the rule of his worde, and his immutable will. Therefore whosoener attribute these things vnto the Starres, denye God his honour, and make man which is the excellentest creature of god, subiect to the course of the Planets and Starres. For the which cause the blindenesse of our dayes is much to be bewayled, which is gone so farre, that it consulteth with the Starres, for the enterprising of their greatest affaires, and hang in hope of them, eyther of good successe, or stande in feare of badde. Why doe we not rather

rather lysten what the prophete sayth; y^e shall not learne the wayes of the
heathen, and y^e shall not be ashamed for the tokens of heauen or for the beautes
of earth &c. of such things. But they had chosen their wayes, and were
in the third sorte it comprehendeth figures or similitudes, which they
made to worshippe God by the more simple waye, to shewe he would
crave vs, p^r his workes daily shewing p^r his power impies denied for wor-
shipping of strange goddes, but even those also, wherewith men will seeme
to honour him? Such as where they conferre the memory of him, and his
workes in Images, and where they sayth p^r teine for the instruction of the
ignorant and vnlerned. These men offend; in that they of theyr owne
head and device, institute such thinges in religion, as God nowhere hath
commaunded. God hath commaunded vnto vs the remembrance of his be-
nefitcs, in a few of sacramentes, yea, and those most easie to be obserued.
For our instruction he hath appointed his worde, and when himselfe pre-
ched, he would haue his voyce onely heard; but no similitude or Image
to be sene. Therefore let vs be contented with these thinges, and buyde
the wisdom of our brutish fleshe, least while we will be wiser than is
mette, we become fooles, as Paule sayth of the gentile philosophers.

Last of all, he threatneth their incurable impietie; every day doing
worse and worse with punishment, saying: I will translate (or carry) you, be-
yonde Babylon; Amos sayth, Damascus, because he would put out of the tenne
tribes myndes, the bayne alliance which they had in their league with the
Assirians. But Steuen hauing more respect to the sense, sayth they shoulde
be caried beyonde Babylon. For so it came to passe in dede. For Salmanazar
kyng of the Assirians, after he had taken Samaria, ouerthrowe the kingdome
of the tenne Tribes, and caried them captiue into Syria. And not long after,
Senacherib miserably afflicted the kingdome of Iury. But whereas by Eze-
chias counsell they turned vnto the Lord, and threw down their Idoles: a-
gaine they were deliuered out of the hande of the Tyrant, by the helpe of an
Angell. But when vnder Manasse, they turned to their homite agayne, and
set vp all their abominable superstition and Idolatry againe, and woulde
not admit the reformation that Iosias begun, but would commit Idolatry
secretly in their houses, as appeareth by the sermons of Sophony: then God
sent Nabuchodonozer to destroy their Citie, to set fire on the temple, and to
cary the remnaunt of the people beyonde Babylon, ouer all his kyngdome.
Thus did God reuege this incurable Idolatry, & prophane cōtempt of his
holly name. And we reade that the like came to passe after that agayne. For
when they were returned home from Babylon, & had made their Temple
and religion a market of lucre and gayne, and a denne of thanes, & would
not admit Christ to reforme it, nor heare his Apostles: God brought Ve-
spasian and Titus to reforme them, who set fire on their Citie and Churche,
and scattered the Jewes that were liuing, ouer all partes of the world. We
ought in these dayes, diligently to consider these things. The horrible mis-
chiefe of Idolatry is greatly increased among Christians. And we lack not
Moloch that lyeth lurking amongst the Monkes, challenging and burning
those which by baptisme are grafted into Christ. Many are beguiled with
the superstitious obseruation of starres. Images made for vs to worship,
and to learne of, stande euery where to be solde. And God hath these many
yeares, by the preaching of his worde, required a reformation, but all in
bayne.

See Paulus
Iouius in the
hystorie of his
tyme, the. 40.
booke.

bayne. Wherefore it is to be feared, least they that will not be reformed, because they will not seeme to haue erred, shall at length be destroyed. And surely their feare is not in bayne which suspect the Turkes shall make all thinge there away. For it is euident, that the Empire of the East was depri-
 ded from the West, for Images sake, and that by this diuision, the power
 of the Sarazens and Turkes is greatly increased, so that God may seeme
 to shewe vs plainly, who and what manner abolishers of Idolatry he hath
 long since appointed. And experience teacheth vs, what horrible examples
 God sheweth vpon obstinate Image worshippers, euery day by the Turkes.
 And surely we may thinke that it was not without the prouidence of God,
 that Soliman Emperour of the Turkes, not many yeares ago, when he had
 wonne Buda, the chiefe Citie of Hungary, would haue St. Maries Church,
 the chiefe church in the citie, cleane ridde of the Altars and all the Images
 in the Church, before he would praiſe thanks to God almighty, for the vic-
 tory giuen vnto hym. For hereby God would plainly testifie, that the
 Idolatrie, which is exercised vnder the pretence of Christ & his Saintes,
 is the chiefe cause, of these our Turkeſhe ouerthrowes and calamities.
 Wherefore the tyme warneth vs at length, to awake, and casting from vs
 all bayne inuentions of men, to worship the God of our fathers, according
 to his prescript, in truth and in spirit, through Iesus Christ our Lord, to
 whome be prayſe, honor, power and glorie, for euer, Amen.

The liij. Homely.

OVR fathers had the Tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had
 appoynted them speaking vnto Moses, that he should make it accordyng to
 the fashion that he had sene. Which Tabernacle also our fathers that came af-
 ter, brought in with Iosue into the possession of the Gentyles, whome God
 draue out before the face of our fathers vnto the tyme of Dauid, which found
 fauour before God, and would sayne haue founded a Tabernacle for the God
 of Iacob, but Salomon built him an house. Howbeit, he that is highest, dwel-
 leth not in Temples made with handes, as sayth the Prophete. Heauen is my
 seate, and the earth is my footstool. What house will you builde for mee
 sayth the Lorde? Or which is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made
 all these thinges?



The accusation against Steuen consisted of
 two speciall pointes: the one was, that he went about
 to abolish and put away the law: the other, that he had
 spoken blasphemie against the Temple, and all their
 rites and ceremonies. The first, he hath thus farre an-
 swered vnto, disputing both earnestly and reuerently,
 touching the lawe and Moses, the minister thereof. For
 he hath shewed, that it was giuen of god by Moses, and
 confesseth it to be the worde of lyfe, because it compre-
 hendeth in it the rule of life, and leadeth vs as a guide & teacher vnto Christ.
 Furthermore, because the Jewes gloried very much, in the name of the fa-
 thers, he declared that they were alwayes disobedient, so that it appeareth
 they were not saued, by the merite of the righteousness of the lawe, but
 through

through the benefite of Gods mercy and fauour. This done, he palleth to the other parte of his accusation, and reasoneth of the holy place or Temple, wherin their chiefe hope of helpe consisted. And to be short, the ende of all Steuens saying is, to proue that God and the right worshipping of hym, is not tyed vnto the Temple. Wherevpon it followeth, that they oughte not straight wayes to be taken for blasphemers of God, which speake agaynst the abolishing therof. First, therfore he intreateth of the Tabernacle, then of the Temple builded about a foure hundred and fourescore yeares, after their coming out of Egypt.

The Tabernacle was a place ordeyned for to do Gods seruice in, made of bordes of Sechim worde, and hanged rounde about with Curtines, being caried vpon two staves, running through ringes of gold, and the Curtines fastened together with loupes, & buttons of silke. In this Tabernacle was the Arke of the Coueraunt, the Golden table, the Candlesticke, the Altare of Incense, the Altare to burne sacrifices on, the Brazen Lauer, with the residue of the implementes belonging to the seruice: concerning which, see Exod. 25. 26. 27. 30. &c. All these thinges he easily graunteth that the fathers had in the wilderness by Moses appointment, which was Gods mouth and Interpreter. And he calleth it the Tabernacle of witness, because God by it testified his presence, and gaue answer in that place for the resolving of the peoples doubtles. He addeth thre thinges wherby he proueth, that the worshipping of God, and God himselfe, is not bound to this place.

First, he saith it was made, according to the paterne and sampler shewed to Moses in the mountaine. Whereby it appeareth, it was but a figure and serued to shadow the mysteries of heauenly thinges, as Paule also in the viij. & ix. Cap. to the Hebrewes hath declared. For this Tent was a figure of the Church, which God will haue to be but one, althoughe it consist of diuers kyndes and orders of men. For it hath teachers which are in steade of pillars, as Paule calleth James, Peter, and Iohn. Gal. 2. It hath bordes of Cedar tre, couered ouer with golde, wherby all the faythfull are signified, whome fayth and beliefe maketh incorrupt, & shining in heauenly brightnesse. All these are ioyned together, with the band aswel of doctrine, as belief, & loue, & are builded vpon Christ, which is the only buttresse & foundation of the whole church. He is in the Arke conteyning the true treasures of heauenly mysteries. He prepareth vs a table, where we may receiue the breade of eternall lyfe. He is as it were, in place of a candlesticke, and by the light of his word, shineth vpon his church. The prayers also that are offered in him, are as a pleasaunt incense, odoure, and swete smell, before God the father. And he is the true Altare, vppon whome we must offer our selues, and the whole conuersation of our lyfe. These thinges might be more largely intreated, but we touche but the chiefe pointes of them, that it may appeare to euery man, why Steuen sayth, the Tabernacle was made, after the heauenly paterne: to the ende herilke, that we might therby vnderstande, that no man in tyme past cleaued to the Tabernacle onely, but that by fayth he was holden in contemplation of Christ, and his church, the mysteries wherof, were by this Tabernacle signified. And that the fathers then pleased God best, when with myndes lyfte vp into heauen, they worshipped God, in spirite and truth. And there are many places of Scripture, wherin they are grievously rebuked, which cleave to the outwarde ceremonies, and neglect the

1. The worshipping of God was not tyed vnto the Tabernacle.

The Tabernacle was a type of heauenly thinges.

Iohn. 4.

Spiritual worshipping. See the Psalm. 50. Ezech. 4. 4. Micheas. 6. Jeremy. 7. &c. In the meane while we are taught, that nothing ought to be instituted in Gods seruice and religion, according to mans deuise and pleasure. For it in tyme past, when outward ceremonies were most in vse, Moses was bounde to obserue the paterne, prescribed of God, and where there appeare horrible examples of them, which durst attempt the contrary: then must we now a dayes be much more diligent to obserue those things which the sonne of God hath appointed to be in his church for euer, vntill in the tyme of his laste coming we be taken with hym, into the Tabernacle of heauen.

The Tabernacle translated into the lande of the Gentiles.

Secondly he sayeth, that when Iosua was captayne, the fathers brought the Tabernacle into the possession of the Gentiles, that is, into an unholy land. Whereby it appeareth again, that the worshipping of god, & the way of saluation, cannot consist therein. Here we are taught by the way, that the holy institutions of God, are not polluted by the place, so that the right & lawfull vse of them be obserued. For God is present euerywhere, and by his presence sanctifieth both those that worship him, and the ceremonies instituted by him. Therefore in an unholy lande, the inhabitants whereof were a little before worshippers of ydoles, might the tabernacle be placed; and all the ceremonies appointed, exercised. That that is spoken of the outward seruice, ought to be vnderstanded also of prayers, which if they proceede of fayth, are acceptable and allowable before God in what place so euer they be said. So God heard Ionas, praying in the belly of the Whale, and Daniels felowes crying out of the furnace, found how God was able to deliuer them. And the roaring of the Lyons, could not let, but that Daniels prayers ascended vnder before the Lorde.

Iohn. 4.

The place of the Tabernacle vncertaine.

Vnto these is added an other argument, taken of the place, whereby he proueth the worshipping of God, not to be tyed to the Tabernacle. For he sayth, it had no abiding place, but was caried vp and downe for fower hundred yeares, vntill the time of Dauid, who was the first that through the singuler goodnesse of god, had by the Aungell, a place shewed vnto him, where the Temple shoulde be builded: which thing we reade he obtayned, by most hartie and feruent prayers, where he sayth: I will not come within the Tabernacle of my house, nor climbe vp into my bedde: I will not suffer myne eyes to sleepe, nor myne eye liddes to slumber, neyther the Temples of my head to take any rest, vntill I finde out a place for the Temple of the Lord, an habitation for the mightie God of Iacob. See the hystorie in the second booke of Sammel. 24. chap. Item in the first of the Chronicles. xxi. chap. Before this time, the Scripture playnely teacheth, that the Tabernacle had no resting place. For first it was placed in Silo, where it seemeth it rested vntill the time of Heli. Whyle Saule was king, it was first in Gilgal, then in Nob, one of the Cities of the Priestes: Under Dauid, it was placed in Gabaon. At length all the things belonging to it, were by Salomon layde vp in the Temple, as it had bene some singuler treasure. Who nowe that is in his witte, will say that the worshipping of god, and meane of saluation was tyed vnto the Tabernacle, where it had neuer no sure abiding place? It is worthy to be diligently considered, where he sayth, it was through the singuler grace of God, that Dauid knewe a certayne place, wherein God would be worshipped, vntill the time of correction. This made for the confirmation and stabilitie

Psalm. 132.

Iosua. 18.

1. Sam. 1. &c

1. Sam. 11. 20

1. Paral. 21.

bilitie of his kingdome, which thing Ieroboam euidently obserued, who perceyued that his kingdome could not be firme & stable, without some certayne place & house for religion. In the meane season we learne, that this is a singuler gift of god vpon earth, if externe religion be firmly established, and that men may safely follow it. This is a most strong bande to conserue Ecclesiasticall vnitie, and an vnspeakeable argument of Gods goodnesse and fauour. They that lyue vnder the tyrannous persecutores of the church acknowledge this thing, and earnestly desire the same. Let vs likewise acknowledge it, which liue in rest & peace, least we prouoke the wrath of God by our notorious vnkinderesse, and being in aduersitie, let vs vnderstande howe great a commoditie that is, which now a dayes so many men make so little account of.

1. Reg. 12.

1. The worshipping of God is not tyed to the Temple.
1. Reg. 6.

Nowe hauing discoursed the thinges belonging to the Tabernacle, he entreteth to reason of the Temple also, which succaded in the Tabernacles place, and which had the very same vse the Tabernacle had. And this the scripture declareth was builded by Salomon, whereas before tyll religion had a place appoynted, there was none. But bicause Dauid thzough diuine reuelation, knew this place: the Jewes seemed not all in bayne to thinke that the true worshipping of God was in that place onely, where Steuen sharply rebuketh their blockheadnesse. For although he graunt them that the Temple was builded by Gods appoyntment, yet he by and by agayne sayth: But hee that is the highest dwelleth not in Temples made with handes. And bicause he would not be reprovued of rashnesse, he bringeth the words of God speaking on this wise in Esay. 66. cap. Heauen is my seate, the earth is my foote stoole, what maner of house will you builde vnto me, sayth the Lord? or which is the place of my rest? Hath not my hande made all these things? By arguments taken of his owne nature, he proueth that he is included in no certain place, nor hath no neede of these things which are done by men. For he that is of all power and might, and whom the heauen of heauens is not able to receyue (as Salomon himselfe confesseth. 1. Reg. 8.) it is impossible, that he can be conteyned within any house. Agayne, he that is the Creator and maker of all things, hath no neede of our benefites, as is declared at large, Psal. 50. These things serue both for our consolation and instruction. For whereas God is euerywhere, he may therefore euerywhere be worshipped, so that we neede to be neyther troubled with ouermuch costes, ne yet with any great labour about the same. And for bicause he hath no neede of our goodes, the true trade of worshipping him and his fauour can not consist in such things. Therefore it is a fowle and filthie error of these hypocrites, which when they had done these things, thought they had fully discharged their duties vnto God. Wherefore it behoueth vs rather to consider what the true vse and meaning of these outward things is. They consist of time, place, & ceremonies. Tyme and place is conuenient for order sake. For as it behoueth vs to appoynt certayne dayes, for religion to be obserued on: so, the same cannot be done, but in some place also. But as saluation is not tyed to obseruation of dayes, no more is it to this or that place. Yet these things haue their vse in religion. For they serue for the vse of the holy congregations, whome it behoueth oftentimes to meete together by reason of the preaching of the worde, publike prayers, and administering of the sacramentes. And bycause Temples be appoynted to these

exercises, therefore they shoulde be exempt from all prophane and secular vsances. Which was the cause that Aggeus the Prophet so much called on the building bp of the Temple. But let vs not superstitiously be tyed in opinion, to the ouermuch reuerencing of the place. Nowe the vse of the Ceremonies appointed by God (for of mans constitutions here is no one worde) such as common custome calleth Sacraments, is to seale or confirme vnto vs the benefites of God, and therefore they lift bp our mindes, by contemplation of fapth into heauen, and admonithe vs of our duties, both to God and to man. These things it becommeth vs well to obserue, and to be contented with them, least being occupied in outward things, we be wrapped in the olde errour of the Jewes, and so lose the heauenly goodes. Let vs therefore worship God the father in spirite and in truth, who hath fully giuen vs in his sonne, our onely Priest and Sauour Iesus Christ, all those things which he sometimes figured to the fathers in signes of ceremonies, and the Temple: to him be prayse, honoz, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The. liiiij. Homelie.

YE stiffe necked and of vncircumcised harts and eares, you haue alwayes resisted the holy ghost. As your fathers did, so doe you. Which of the Prophetes haue not your fathers persecuted? And they haue slayne them which shewed before of the comming of that iust, whome you haue now betrayed and murthred. And ye also haue receyued the lawe by the ministracion of Aungelles, and haue not kept it: when they hearde these things, their hearts claue a sunder, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.



Thus farre the blessed Martyr Steven hath answered the obiections layde agaynst him, and with long discourse hath shewed that he neuer blasphemed God nor his law, nor yet the Temple. For beginning at Abraham, he declareth that he is a worshypper of that onely God, who did vouchsafe in time past to reueale himselfe vnto the fathers, and to offer vnto them his grace. That done, he maketh a singuler discourse of the lawe, and proueth that Christ was evidently promised to the fathers in the lawe. At length intreating of the Temple, and outward obseruances, he proueth by most strong arguments, that neyther the grace of God is tyed to them, neyther the true worshipping of him, nor yet the meane of mannes saluation. But bycause Steven was not ignorant what manner of Judges he shoulde haue in his cause, and for that they coulde no longer dissemble the rage of their mindes, as euery man may easily gather of the circumstances, with a weyghtie & beheiment kynde of reprehending them, he concludeth his Oration. Where we maye perceyue that it was Steuens purpose and intent to plucke of the busire from the faces of them, which bragged in the name of the church, and fowly abused their power, that they should no longer feare the simple and vnlearned with this lye conueyance of theirs. And this is a thing very needeful, when we perceiue we haue to do with them, with whome the worde of doctrine will not preuaile. And sure-

Ipe in our daies nothing so much hindzeth the verity, as that they be the enemies therof, which many yeres haue challenged to them the name & gouernance therof. Wherefore it is necessary, that they which haue the charge of the Church committed vnto them, doe followe euen at this day also, the example of Steuen. But to come to the handling of this present place, there were thre things specially which made them the prowder: that is to saye, Circumcision, the glory and dignitie of the fathers, and the lawe giuen them by Gods speciall benefite. And of all these, the godlye Martyr of Christ so speaketh, that he playnely proueth all their affiaunce to be in vaine, which they had in them.

And beginning with Circumcision, he sheweth that they glozved therein in vayne, calling them stiffnecked, and of vncircumcised hearts and eares. He seemeth to haue a respect vnto the wordes of Moses, and of God, which are written Deuteronomie. 10. and Ieremie. 4. as though he shoulde saye: I knowe you haue a great confidence in Circumcision, but that is but a very vanitie, seeing you neglect the circumcision of the heart and minde. God woulde that you shoulde by an outwarde signe professe hys couenaint, but he commaunded you to circumcise your heartes with the sword of the spirite, and to put your neckes hytherto, ouermuch disobedient into the yoke of his obedience. But it is playne that you neuer woulde thus doe: For you euer resisted the holy ghost speaking to you by the Scriptures, and by the Prophetes. So Steuen accuseth them of no common disobedience, but of heynous incredulitie, as who went about to mocke God with their Circumcision, which was but a signe of Gods couenant. This place teacheth vs, that men are little holpen by outwarde signes, vnlesse they sticke vnto the thinges signified by them. For where God is a spirite, he will not be worshipped with vaine ceremonies, but in the spirite and in truth. As for the Ceremonies, he hath instituted them for our sakes, to the intent they shoulde bring our mindes by contemplation of sayth, to the consideraunce of our dutie. Which thing if we neglect, then the signes improue vs of infidelitie, and excuse vs not, which is the cause that the Prophetes so earnestly accuse the obseruers of outwarde ceremonies, and so carefully commend vnto them, the care of spirituall worshipping. This serueth also to teache vs, that we cleaue not too much to baptisme, and to the supper, and so neglect the sayth that is in Christ, and the studie of innocencie and charitie, without the which Christian religion cannot consist. And if the colde obseruation of rytes commaunded by God, is not able to saue vs, what shall we say of the obseruers of mens traditions, which God hath wyped cleane awaye with the sword of his worde, as otherwheres we haue declared: Esay. 29. Math. 15. We are taught also what manner of men they are, which wickedly resist the worde of God, preached by men, which thing it is euident the Jewes dyd. For they (sayeth Steuen) resisted not the Prophetes, but the holy ghost. And we must not thinke he thus sayd at all aduentures. For where Ministers speake by the inspiration of the holy spirite, and the same spirite worketh obedience in mennes mindes, and putteth vs often in remembrance of amendement of our lyfe, certes they resist this spirite, that refuse to obey this worde. And this is an infallible argument of vncircumcised hearts, and stiffe necks. Here therefore haue we a rule howe to iudge of the people of these dayes, which marueylously please and delyght themselves,

1. He beateh
downe confi-
dence in Cir-
cumcision.

2. By ouer-
throweth the
confidence in
their forefa-
thers.
Math. 3.
John. 8.

Esay. 53.

1. Cor. 1.
Ierem. 23.

selues, in that they dare boldly contemne the sermons of Gods Ministers, and can scoffe and rayle at the m.

But let vs retorne vnto Steuen, which likewise ouerthroweth that gloze that they sought in the dignitie of their auncestry. For that the Jewes put great confidence in their forefathers, it appeareth by this. For when Iohn the Baptist and Christ, admonished them to amende their lyfe, they chopte him in the teth with Abraham their father, and alleaged the prerogative of their stocke. But Steuen maketh a difference betwene their forefathers. There were amonge them certaine good and sincere worshippers of God, such as was Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, and their likes in whom they coulde not gloze, being altogether unlike them, as bastardest going out of kynde. Againe, there were other notorious wicked persons, and bloudy tyrannes, against the Prophetes. Vnto these sayth he, these fellowes were lyke, because they lively represented their natures and condicions, yea passed them. As your fathers did, euen so do you. Which of the Prophetes haue not your fathers persecuted? And they haue killed them, which shewed before of the coming of that Iuste. So calleth he Jesus Christ, who is both absolutely iuste himself: for in whose mouth there could be found no guile and is made of god the father our righteousness. Wherefore in Ieremy he is called y lord our righteousness. Furthermore, as your fathers killed y prophets, which foretold of him, as the monuments & sepulchres declare that are builded in y honor of them: euen so did you betray Christ himselfe, to the Romane President, and made him out of the way by the most cruell death of the crosse. Thus you haue not only fulfilled y measure of your fathers, but farre exceeded the. And as these things were not spoken by Steuen without the secret working of Gods holy spirite: so must we thinke, it was not without the will of God, that the same thinges were written and left vnto posteritie. For they teache vs howe we should deale with them, which gloze in the vertues of their ancestozs, and in the title of lawfull succession, and beguile the simple people with the authoritie they chalenge to themselves. In which number we now adayes see the Bishops of Rome are, who notwithstanding they persecute the doctrine of the Apostles, with fire and sword, infecting the whole worlde, with the example of a most abhominable and corrupt lyfe, and turne true religion into lucre and gayne: yet they vaunt themselves to be Christes Vicars, the successours of Peter and Paule, and constantly affirme, that the Church of Rome cannot erre. And with their sleightes, it is manifest, that the worlde hath bene deceiued these great many yeares. Therfore this visure must be pulled of from their faces, and the saythfull ministers of the church must not suffer that great Alse disguised in a Lions skinne, to let by and doونه, and fraye the consciences of simple people any longer. And they are not in this behalfe to be heard, which would not haue these thinges talked so, but prescribe vs rules of modestie, & mekenesse. For where the gloze of Christ is assaulted, and the saluation of the soule imperilled, there remaineth no place for feare, or mekenesse. This thing Christ well perceyued, whome I thinke no man will finde fault with about his modesty and mekenesse. And he thought it good to beate downe the false Bishops, with all kynde of severity, rather than by cowardly or preposterous lenitie. Whose example both Steuen and the other Apostles, most rightly followed. But before we let this pæce passe, you shall note that the Prophetes were foreshewers of Christ.

Christ. This thing Christ himselfe confelleth. And Peter attributeth to them the same thing. This maketh for the certaintie and dignitie of our faith, that we thinke it not a thing either newly invented, or an uncertaine persuasion of a small number of persons.

Luke. 24.
1. Pet. 1.

Steven goeth on with his purpose, and taketh from them the bayne assistance of the lawe, which seemed to be the chiefe thing amongst Gods benefites, David testifying, that god shewed to no Nation the like declaration of his goodnesse. He confelleth this was given them by ministry of Angels, by whose presence God thought good to shewe unto them, the glorie of his maiestie. But he sheweth that the glory, which they sought therein, was but bayne, because they were neuer obedient thereunto. For they being overcome with the desire of sinne, neglected the lawe, and wickedly persecuted Christ, to whome the law brought them. Whereupon we gather, that that glory also is in bayne, which we haue in the word of God, and doctrine of the Gospel, vnlesse we expresse in our lyues, the thinges prescribed by them. For Blessed (saith Christ) are they, that heare the worde of God, and keepe it. And in an other place, he putteth from him, and refuseth the workers of iniquitie, whiche neglect the will of his father. In the consideration wherof we now a dayes ought diligently to meditate. For if the transgressors of Moses lawe, were grievously punished, what shall come vnto them whiche wickedly contempne the worde of the Gospel, deliuered to vs by Christ? Surely Christ sayeth, they shall be more grievously punished, than those of Sodome and Gomorthe.

iff. He beatech
them from
their assistance
in the lawe.
Psal. 147

Luke. 11.
Math. 7.

Math. 10.
Hebr. 10.
How Stevens
enemies like
of his Oration
on 2^d sermon.

And this is the most graue and iust defence of Steven the first Martyr, which as it ought to haue bene of great force and weight with the godly, so with y^e professed enemies of Christ, it lacked not only successe, but also did exasperate their myndes, as with a sharpe goade of greater vngodlinesse. For Luke writeth, that when they had heard this, their hartes claued a sunder, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. The cleauing of hartes signifieth the sorrow of an heart, boyling in rage and fury, wherewith they were cruelly set on fire, for their yre was so great, that they could not hide it, no not in y^e place appointed euer for Iustice and Gods religion. Now the gnashing of teeth testified they were become like vnto madde dogges. Hereby is expressed the propertie of the wicked, who the more they are bided with the word of God, the more intollerably they scoorne & rage, and are inflamed against them; whome God hath appointed preachers of his worde. So we reade, that Caine was the more incensed by Gods speaking and admonition. And there are infinite examples of these men, the which it is not needfull to rehearse, because we see the like every day. Let vs learne, that this is an infallible token of extreme vngodlinesse. For what good can a man hope for of him who is not the better, but y^e worse, for the word of God? Let vs therfore subdue this affection, as soone as we feele our selues touched or moued therewith. In the meane season let vs learne, that the ministers of the worde, must not therfore holde their peace because the vngodly are incensed with their reprehension. For Paule commaundeth them to be instant both in season, and out of season. And let no man be offended though he preuayle nothing by his saying among them. For albeit there ensue no other effect of y^e worde: yet the faithfull minister therof shall at least deliuer his owne soule. And in the meane while, there shall not want electe seruantes of Christe,

2. Tim. 4.

Ezech. 3.

who

who shall be instructed, by that that is preached to the wicked, for a testimony of iust condemnation. God the father of mercy graunt that we may duly heare the Oracles of his worde, and that we being transformed into the same, may no maner of way displease his Majesty, through Jesus Christ our Lorde: to whome be prayse, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The. iij. Homely.

B V T he being full of the hollye Gh^{ost} looked vp stedfastly with his eyes into heauen, and saw the glory of God, and Iesus standing on the right hand of God, and sayde. Behold I see the heauens open, and the sonne of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they gaue a shoute with a lowde voyce, and stopped their eares, and ranne vpon him all at ones, and cast out of the Citie and stoned him. And the witness layde downe their clothes at a yongemannes seete, whose name was Saule. And they stoned Steven calling on, and saying: Lord Iesu, receyue my spirite. And he kneeled downe and cryed with a lowde voyce: Lorde, laye not this sinne to their charge. And when he had thus spoken, he fell on sleepe.



Although the worde of GOD be both fruitefull and wholsome, yet it bringeth forth fruite, but in them only which heare the same, with mindes rightly framed and disposed. But it so little profiteth the wicked, that they thereby are rather fretted and made the worse. For where their myndes froath and boyle like vnto the sea, the more they are pressed and brged therewith, the more they vse to raue. Examples we haue herof euerywhere, among which, this one that is set forth in this Counsell, gathered together against Steven, is verye notable. For where Steven had declared his innocencye by moste weightie reasons and proofes, and had with worthy wordes reprehended their canckred and olde maliciousnesse: so little are they moued woth any remorse of conscience, to amende their lyfe that they rather conceyue in their heartes, and vtter an vntreatable rage and fure, (a most filthy faulte in a Judge) not onely by alteration of countenance, but also by a doggish manner of gnashing vpon him with their teeth. And yet might this, after a sorte, haue bene suffered, if they had helde their handes. But as though they had not hitherto betrayed their madnesse ynough, they ioyned here vnto the vniworthy death and punishment of a most innocent man: which thinge Luke very diligently describeth, bicause it teacheth vs many things, touching the deathe of Martyrs, and diuers other thinges are therein comprehended, which make both for our comfort and instruction.

He beginneth with the thinges that God shewed by his Martyr wrapped in so many woes and daungers. For when he perceyued himselfe set in the middle of a sorte of Wolues, and no hope of any mans helpe appearng, he began with eyes lift vp into heauen, to seeke the helpe of God. Which thing God long denied him not, but sheweth him a vision, wherewith both himself is comforted, and his enemies made afeard. By which thing we are taught that God forsaketh not those that be his, when they be in daunger. For he

saith

God comforteth Steven, being ready to be put to death.

seeth them, and heareth them, as the scripture euerywhere teacheth. And for bicause he is a father, he is touched with their miseries, he hath pitie on them being in distresse, and sheweth himselfe to be a most faythfull reuenger. And although he alwayes deliuereth vs not from present daungers, yet he comforteth our myndes in suche wyse, that we are able to beare and suffer them. Let vs therefore learne to haue no respect of mannes helpe, which is most bayne, but to lift our eyes vp into heauen, and then shall we not be deceyued of our hope. For this is the saying of all the godlye whiche Dauid uttereth: I haue lifte vp myne eyes vnto the hilles, from whence cometh my helpe. My helpe cometh from the Lorde, which hath made heauen and earth. And the Prophete pronounceth him happye whose hope and trust is in the Lorde, and accurseth him, which trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his strength.

Psal. 121.

Iere. 17.

The maner
and order
how God
comforteth.
Iohn. 14.

It shall be profitable for vs to consider, the maner and order howe God comforteth Steuen. In this point the holy ghost hath the first place, where with Luke sayth Steuen, was replenished. Here the Lord perfourmed that he promised, where he sayth: he would not leaue vs comfortlesse, but sende vs the holy ghost to comfort vs. Him we haue very much neede of, by reason of the infirmitie of the flesh, & him we desire of God as Christ commaundeth, saying: Let thy kingdome come. With this spirit the faythfull being emboldened, do easily contempne the assaults of the world. For of him is this saying of Iohn to be vnderstanded: Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the worlde. But bicause there appeared on euery side suche thynges as might feare, the most valiaunt Martyr, it pleased God also to sende hym outward comfort. He sheweth hym therefore a vision, conteyning all the meane of saluation. For he seeth the heauens opened, which thing we reade also was done in the baptisme of Christ. Christ also appeared in his glozve, standing on the right hande of the father. Which thinges forasmuch as they are reported by the name of a vision, and where also it was said before, that he lifted vp his eyes into heauen, I thinke they appeared to hym in daede visibly, and were not offered only to the contemplation of his mynde. And we neede not here to dispute much of naturall sight, forasmuch as these thinges appeared to Steuen onely, to whose eyes it was a most easie thyng for God, to giue so straunge and farre pearcing a sighte. And it was needefull, that this first Martyr, should see such thinges, that we might vnderstand, what all others had to hope of. For they signifie vnto vs, that now through the merite of Christ, the heauens be open to vs, and that we haue in them, as Christ promised, a place prepared for vs. Furthermore, they declare that Christ raigneth in heauen, and doth not like an ydle and sluggish body, neglect his peoples quarell, but standeth in a readinesse to preserue and deliuer them, as a trustie and faythfull Shepheard, which suffereth not his sheepe to be taken out of his handes. And here vnto me thinketh are the prayers of the Saintes to be referred, wherein they desire, that God woulde arise vp, and saue them. And although Steuen onely had the grace, to see these thinges, yet GOD moued him by his spirit to shewe the wicked Iudges of them. Which thing he did very boldly. For therby they might vnderstande, that all their enterprises against Christ were bayne, forasmuch as he now triumphantly raigned in heauen, whome a little before they had put to the most shamefull death of the Crosse. We must learne a generall lesson hereof, to

1. Iohn. 4.

Ioh. 10.

Psa. 3. 35. 44

Psal. 110.

1. The fury of
Steuens eni-
mies is incur-
rable.

Psal. 58.

The wic-
ked obserue a
shew of equi-
tie.
Leuit. 24.
Deut. 13. 17.

Prouerb. 6.

knowe that Christs power and force is inuincible, althoughe the wicked world storne and striue against him neuer so much. For Dauid long sithe us fozetolde, that this woulde be his proprietie, to beare rule euen in the midst of his enemies.

But nowe what did Steuens enemies among all these things? Did the declaring of these matters any thing mitigate their raging and moody mindes? No truly. For first with furious shewing they make a noyse and outcrie agaynst the holy man, and stoppe their eares, so that they woulde not, no not agaynst their willes, heare the worde of God. This is the proprietie of all the wicked, that they refuse nothing so much as the word of God, and can neyther heare nor suffer the same, bicause nothing is more contrarie to their desires and purpose. Wherefore Dauid likeneth them to Adders, which stoppe their eares, bicause they woulde not heare the wordes of the Charmer: But this wickednesse deserueth, that they shall crye another time, and not be hearde, as the Prophete sayth, Mich. 3. And at length, they shall heare that last and horrible sentence of Christ their Iudge, which shall sende them with Satan their king, into the paynes of eternall fyre. And yet not contented with noyse and crying out to trouble Steuen, preaching of the glorie of Christ, they turne them to open violence. For with one consent they runne vpon him, thrust him out of the Citie, and stone him. Where it appeareth with what argumentes the wicked vse to dispute agaynst the truth, verily with seditious shewing and clamor, with vniust force, wyth stones, swordes, firebrandes, and whatsoeuer other instrumentes of the power of darckenesse. With these we reade the Prophetes were in tymes past assaulted. With such they disputed agaynst Christ. And the hystorie following will shewe howe they vled the same agaynst the Apostles. But bicause Christ hath many times giuen vs warning of these thinges, we must not be offended at the same. Let vs therefore be so prepared, that they light not vpon vs vnawares, and vnlooked for.

It is woorthy of great obseruation and heede, that whyle they rage most in violence and wrong, yet they seeme to obserue a kinde of lawe and equitie. For bicause they had accused him of blasphemie agaynst God, and false doctrine, therefore they gyue him the punishment appoynted of God for blasphemers and seducers. And the witnesses (as is prescribed in the law) threwe the first stones at him, which to doe with the more ease, they put of their apparel, and deliuer it vnto Saule to keepe, who after he was conuerted vnto Christ, was called Paule. Therefore here wanteth nothing, belonging to the forme of lawe. And Steuen myght seeme iustly to haue suffered, and according to the lawe. But that is not alwayes lawfully done, which hath a shewe of lawe, and we must dæpely wey the causes of punishments or else we shall grieuouly erre in our iudgement. In the meane season marke howe God sometime suffreth the wicked, with whose rage he will haue his people exercised, to fyll by the measure of their wickednesse. And by example of the witnesses we are taught howe farre impietie proceedeth, if it be not stopped at the beginning. They sinned in bearing of false wytnesse, being neyther ignorant of the lawe of God, neyther of the punishment appoynted for false wytnesses. And they are not afrayde that Salomon sayth, the Lorde hateth and vtterly abhorreth a false witnesse. They are not yet contented to haue committed so horrible a fault: but they go further,

and

and embzue their handes with innoient bloude, where also they were not ignorant of that that is written in the lawe touching murtherers. So true it is that Salomon sayth: when the wicked are once ouer their shooes, there is no hoe with them. Let vs therefore feare the entpying beginnings of sinne, least whyle they instill into vs an hatred to the worde of God, we sticking fast in the toughe myer thereof, be at length wholye swallowed vp of the great gulfe of vngodlynesse. The things sayde of Saule, who, as it is written, consented to the death of the holpe man, and receyued great pleasure therein, make a waye and preparation to the hystorie following, and for the setting forth of the glozy of God. But of these things, more shall be sayde in their place.

Num.35.

Prou. 18.

3. What Steu-
en doth be-
ing at the point
of death.

It remaineth that we declare howe Steuen behaued himselfe, when he was put to this cruell death, where thre thinges are tolde of him. First he called vpon the Lorde, which thing we beleue he continually bled to doe. And it is expessed, that he prayed in thre wordes: Lorde Iesu receyue my spirite. These wordes haue in them the confession of a true fayth, and an argument and token of a great and strong beliefe. For being on e- uery side beset with the terrors of death, yet he acknowledged and confes- seth that Christ is his Sauour, folowing the example of the thre crucified with Christ. Further, he beleueth that the soules dye not in death, but passe to the state of a better life, yea, he knoweth, that euen in death through fayth in Christ, men fynde lyfe. This is a great prayse of fayth, that euen then it is inuincible, and comforteth vs when all other helpes fayle. Also Steuens example teacheth vs to whome to commende our soules, when we be at the point of death. Not to Saintes as the superstitious vse, but vnto Christ our Lorde, who as he hath redeemed them with the pryce of his bloude: so by his resurrection he hath overcome death, and by his as- cention into heauen, hath prepared for vs a place, in the which we shall be gathered vnto him. Secondarily, Steuen sheweth a token of charitie, which can not be seperated from fayth. For folowing the example and commaun- dement of Christ, he prayeth for his enemies, that God woulde not punishe them for their sinne, as they deserued. This reprooueth the wickednesse of his enemies, which put him to death, as an enimie of the common weale, which witnesseth by his last wyth he made, that no man was more desirous of all mennes welfare, than he. But this is the state of the vngodly in this worlde, the chiefe cause of whose infelicitie, is this, that they neyther can knowe their benefactors, nor beware of the most daungerous enemies of the publike weale. Let vs learne to extende our charitie, euen to the in- gratefull, and with godly prayers commende them to God which moste grievously offende agaynst vs. And let vs not suffer our selues to be feared with the wickednesse of men, forasmuch as Gods iudgements be vnkown to vs, and God lightly vseth not to reueale vnto euery man, who they be, that are incurable amongst men, as we reade he did sometime vnto Iere- mic 7. 14. 15. cap. Let vs also be stirred bppe with the effect of this prayer, which the conuersion of Saule alone proueth, was not fruitelesse.

Iohn. 14.

Math. 5.

Last of all is sayd, that Steuen hauing thus spoken, fell on slape, whom yet his enemies hoped now with his doctrine, to haue now bene cleane dis- patched out of the way. The scripture oftentimes vseth this word slepe, spea- king of the death of the godly. For so is the condicion & propertie of death set

Steuens fal-
leth on slepe.

forth. Death is the resolution or dissolution of man, consisting of soule and body. In this death the soule neyther dyeth nor slepeth, but passeth into lyfe euerlasting, as Christ sayth, Iohn. 5. Where vpon death hath aptly bene called, a passing into heauen. The body is sayde to slepe, bicause it is layde in the earth, as it were to slepe, out of the which in the latter daye, it shall be raysed vp by Christ, that it may also enioye the blysse of heauenly lyfe. There are euerywhere testimonies of Scripture concerning these things, and occasion shall serue oftentimes to intreate of the same. Wherefore we now meane to be brieue. Let vs set Steuen before vs to imitate, that when we shall depart this lyfe, our soules being gone before, to the dwellings of the blessed and happy, we being at the last gloriously raysed vp also in body, may attayne to the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen, through

Jesus Christ our Lorde: to whome be prayse, honour,

power, and glory for euer.

Amen.

The eyght chapiter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The. lvi. Homelie.

AT that tyme there was a great persecution agaynst the congregation which was at Hierusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Iurie and Samarie, except the Apostles. But deuout men dressed Steuen, and made great lamentation ouer him. As for Saule, he made haucke of the Congregation, and entred into euery house, and drew out both menne and women, and thrust them into prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went euery where preaching the worde of God.



The holy ghost would haue the unworthye death of the blessed Martyr Steuen with great diligence described by Luke, not so muche for Steuens sake, that his name according to the Oracle of Dauid, might be had in perpetuall remembrance, but for our sakes, for whose instruction and comfort the hystorie doth greatly serue. For we are taught by the example of the most holy man, and first Martyr, how we also ought to suffer all manner of extremitie for Christs sake and the truths, and not to thynke death,

be

be it neuer so cruell, forasmuch as we haue Christ to be our reuenger, who hath layde by for vs, a moste excellent rewarde in heauen. Agayne, it is moste comfortable, that we see the kingdome of Christ is not ouerwhelmed with the slaughters and tyrannie of the wicked, but rather dylated and enlarged. For as this thing hath oftentimes otherwheres bene declared, so at this tyme the hystorie following abundantly sheweth it came to passe, what tyme as Steuen receyued the garlande of martyrdome: to the declaration whereof Luke in this present place prepareth him, premising thre things, whereby that that we now haue sayd is proued, euery one of which thre things we will intreate of in order.

First, it is sayde that an vniuersall and cruell persecution, was raysed in Jerusalem agaynst the Church. We haue seene diuers things before attempted by the Priestes, but the Apostles were chiefly then thrust at, and the enemies repressed with feare of the people, were the more calme. But nowe perceyuing all thinges succede agaynst Steuen as they woulde haue them, and that there aryleth no tumult or businesse in the people, lyke beastes, hauing once tasted bloude, they were the more thirstie therfore, yea, more cruell and bolde, and set vpon the whole body of the congregation, to ouerthrowe it. Wherein they so rage and take on, that within a short whyle the whole Congregation is scattered throughout Iurie and Samaria, which hither vnto dwelt togiether in Jerusalem. It shalbe for our profite diligently to behold this vieue of the primitive Church. For in this Church we see all thinges are verie well ordred after the rule of Christ. And the Apostles had oftentimes notable victorie, when they were apprehended and caused to pleade their cause before Counsellers. Wherevpon any body would haue hoped that great rest and peace shoulde haue ensued. But (beholde) horrible tumultes aryle vpon the sodayne, and the enemies emboldened wpyth the death of Steuen alone, cruelly make warre, and set on the whole Congregation. What shall we therfore in these dayes hope for, whose Roth and manifold defectes, deserue a more seuerer correction? For if God haue suffered these thinges to come to passe in the greene tre, what shall he doe in the drie? This place also reproveth their preposterous iudgements, which vse to pronounce of fayth and the doctrine of fayth, according to the successe of thinges falling out in the worlde. For if we shall beleeue these men, then must we confesse that the Priestes quartell was good and right, and that the primitive Church was vtterly decayed. But we must search deeper for the causes of Gods iudgements, and then we shall perceyue that it is for our saluation, that we be exercised and inbred with the furiousnesse of the wicked, who in the meane season fill by the measure of iniquitie, and at length receyue worthy punishment for their tyrannie at Christes handes, who is the defender of his Church.

But here is chiefly to be considered, how the Apostles remayne in the cite, after all the residue were fled. Yet we reade that before this, they were chiefly molested and troubled. Wherefore it must needs be, that they were wonderfully preserued by the help of God, in this boysterous tempest of persecution. For God would haue his gospel long preached in this bloudy cite of Jerusalem, to the intent that both his mercy and iustice might the more easily appere. His mercy and goodnesse, in that hee suffered the doctrine of grace and saluation, so long to be preached to them, that were embred

1. In vniuersall persecution of the Church.

The Apostles remayne at Jerusalem

with

with the bloude of his sonne. His iustice, in that he subuerted by horrible destruction, those that were incurable, and woulde not repent. In the meane whyle we haue two thinges to consider. First, that there are certayne limits & bounds appointed for the wicked persecutors of the congregation, which they cannot go beyond. For he that hath set a border about the sea, within the which that great heape of waters is conteyned, & he that bindeth Satan by his lawes: the same brideth the wicked, that they cannot do as they would, nor vse crueltie agaynst whom they would. Herein receyue we great consolation of mynde, when we consider that the lawes of Gods prouidence, can not be broken with the rage of the wicked. Agayne, the Apostles gyue vs an example of faythfull Superintendents of the word and of the Congregation. For although they knewe that Christ sayde: when they persecute you in one Citie, flie vnto another: yet because they were bounde by a certayne obligation, and perceyued that the remnant of the Church was lyke to fall awaye, if they also shoulde leaue the Citie, they had rather to hazarde their lyfe, than by vn honest flying to forsake the congregation. And surely, Ministers haue neede in this case, diligently to beware. For as all are not rashly to be condemned, which by flying prouyde for themselves: so must we not thinke it lawfull for euery man, at all times, and in all places. But if it be in such a case, that the Minister alone is sought for of the enemye, or else he be forsaken of them which hitherto woulde haue the name of a congregation, or if no ruine or detrement ensue vnto the Congregation, by his departing: then is there no cause, why he may not reserue himselfe for a more commodious season. But they that forsake the publyke cause of the Congregation, and go from them that holde fast the confession of fayth: these in dede be Apostatas and hyzelinges, who Christ sayeth, vse to flie, when they see the wolfe come. Woulde to God they had well considered these things, which in these dayes to hastily forsooke their Churches, whom it behoued rather to haue folowed the ensample of Ambrose, which denied to deliuer his Churches vnto the Arrianes, although the Emperour commaunded it. See the Epistle to Marcella his sister, which in number is the thirtie and thre.

Iohn. 10.

See the Tripartite
history the. ix.
booke, and xx.
Chap. See a lyke
storye of godlye
courage in Am-
brose agaynst
Theodolius the
Emperor, whom
Ambrose had
excommunicated
for a great slaugh-
ter committed
at Thessalonica,
and would haue
comen into the
Church at Mi-
lane, but was
withstanded of
Ambrose in the
same booke the
xxx. Chap.
* What the
faythfull dyd
towards Ste-
uen.

* Luke going on in his history begunne, sheweth what the faythfull which remayned in the Citie, did vnto Steuen being thus stoned. First, he sayeth they dressed him, that is, they buried him. This is a most auncient blage, agreeable to that firste sentence pronounced of God, where he sayeth, that we came of the earth, and shall returne to the earth agayne, and conteyneth the mystery of the resurrection, in that bodies are committed to the ground, as seedes vnto the earth, which afterward shall be rayled vp with more glory. Howbeit, it is like, the holy men had an other consideration. For while they decently bury him that was condemned by the sentence of the counsell, they manifestly reproue the vnrighteousnesse of their aduersaries, & giue an euident testimony of y^e fayth which Steuen had preached. Furthermore, they declare how they reuerenced him, who they saw was so singular an instrument of Christ. And they are not like vnto those which now adays vse to let slip the raynes of an impotent & vnbridled tonge, against the ministers of the word, by whose free speech and doctrine, they see their enemyes are incensed, and so seeke after the bloud of the faithfull ministers of Christ, & deride their constancy & boldnesse, whom they ought to reuerence & honor. In the meane time,

we

we learne by this example what we owe to the bodies of the deade, that is to say, honest and comely buriall: forasmuch as Paule sayeth, our bodies be the Temples of the holy ghost. We must in our burynges vse no pryde or superstition, wherin diuers faultes are now adayes committed. For there are some, which puffed vp with vanitie, doe so forgette their mortall estate, that they will after death also be proude, while they fasten the armes & cognizances of bayne glory about their Tumbs. There are other again which labour by Diriges and sacrifices, to do away the sinnes of the dead, or else, after a peculiar sorte of ceremonie, vse to canonize them, and make them saintes: wherof the one is pœuith, and without example, the other derogatory and repugnaunt vnto Christes merite and doctrine, which teacheth vs that those that beleeue, passe from death vnto lyfe, and haue neede of no new expiations. Moreouer, they make great lamentation ouer Steuen. And that is not against the rule of Paule, whiche forbiddeth vs we shoulde not mourne as the heathen do. For they lament not, as vncertaine & doubtfull of Steuens estate, but for that they see the wicked to haue such power, and the church depriued of so excellent a Minister, which might yet haue done very much good, in setting forth the kingdome of Christ. Neither are they to be blamed, which cannot by and by forget their friendes, like men boyde of all humanitie and common sense, but are enforced to wepe, forasmuch as God hath not made vs blockes, and the scripture euery where condemneth those that be destitute of naturall affections. On this sort we reade Abraham bewayled Sara his wife, Ioseph with his brethren, Iacob their father: the people of Israell, Aaron, Moses, and Samuel, wyth godly dutie. Yea, Christe when he sawe the two sisters mourne, wepte, for his beloued Lazarus. In deede, a meane must be kept, lest we may be thought either to enuy the dead their heauenly felicitie, or else to stande in doubt, or not firmly to beleeue the inheritaunce of the same.

Last of all, Luke setteth vs out a singuler example of tyranny that Saule vsed against the church: wherin first the great crueltie of the tyranne, next the bayne successe of his purpose and intent, is to be considered. Of this Saule, it was sayd before, that he consented to the death of Steuen, and kept their clothes that stoned him, wherby is signified that he was guiltie of innocent bloude. But now he can not be satisfied with the tyrannye of an vniuersall persecution, but deuileth a peculiar way, and goeth about vtterly to pull by the church as it were by the rootes. And he setteth not on them alone, which openly professed the faith, but bursteth into priuate houses, and draweth out, not onely men, but women also, whome the infirmities and weakenesse of sere defended, and putteth them in prison, in so much, that certayne writers thinke not vntwittily the Oracle of a Wolfe, that shoulde come out of the tribe of Benjamin, ought to be applied vnto this Saule. For he was in deede a rauenyng Wolfe, which yet at length when he was conuerted, distributed the wholesome spoiles of Euangelicall preaching, almost ouer the whole world. And the thinges which Luke here reporteth of him, he himselfe oftentimes confesseth, yea, he lamenteth hym of the same verie often. See Actes. 26. 1. Cor. 15. Galath. 1. The vse of them all is, that we shoulde acknowledge the goodnesse of God whiche did boughsafe to take into his fauour so great an enemy. For as he himselfe interpreteth the matter: On hym, would Iesus Christ shewe all long patience, to declare an example

Iohn. 9.

1. Thes. 4.

Ioh. 11.

3. Saule is a
singuler ex-
ample of ty-
ranny.

Gen. 49.

1. Tim. 1.

Math. 24.

ample vnto them, which should beleue on him, vnto eternall lyfe. But what preuayled Saules great enterpryse? Could he make hauocke of the church? Nothing lesse. Yea, he was the cause, that they beyng scattered hither and thither, spred the word of saluation & kingdome of Christ the further. Thus God knewe how to set forth the glorie of his sonne, euen by those wayes, which seemed most to hinder it. Wherunto also is to be referred, how the euill spirites, in the gospel euen against their will, brought before Christe, and threwn to the ground those whom they thought they had all power ouer. Therefore their feare is foolish, which suffer themselves to be discouraged with the attemptes of tyrannes. In the meane while we are aduertised of our dutie, that we be not overcome with persecutions, nor forsake not our dutie by and by. Which thyng diuers doe in these dayes, who hauing bene once or twise in daunger, make holyday for euer after, as though they had fully discharged their dutie toward Christ already. But they of whom Luke here speaketh do better, which being driven out of Ierusalem, are by their banishment made the bolder, and preach Christ euerywhere, being myndfull of that sentence, which sayth, they shall be saued, not which begin well, but which continue vnto the ende. Let vs therefore follow their zeale, that after we haue faithfully finished this race of life, we may attaine to the garland of the heauenly reward, through Iesus Christ: to whom be all praise, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The. iiii. Homelie.

THEN came Phillip into a Citie of Samarie, and preached Christ vnto them. And the people gaue heede vnto those things which Phillippe spake, with one accord, hearing and seying the myracles which he did. For vncleane spirites crying with lowde voyce, came oute of many that were possessed of them. And manye taken with palseyes, and many that halted, were healed. And there was great ioye in that Citie. But there was a certaine man called Simon, which before tyme in the same Citie vsed witchcraft, and bewitched the people of Samarie, saying that he was a man that coule doe great things, whome they regarded from the least, to the greatest, saying: this man is the power of God, which is called great. And hym they set much by, because that of long tyme, he had bewitched them with forceries.



Although the Kingdome of Christ and the church is alway assaulted and set on, by the wicked, yet can it not be overcome, because the truth of Gods Oracles and promises is infallible, who hath appointed to Christ his sonne, an everlasting kyngdome. This haue we seene hitherto proued and declared, by many examples. For oftentimes did they strue stoutly, both in the Senate and in the Counsell against the Apostles, but the truth had alwaye the victorie. At length Steven was stoned, and the eniemies being made the more fierce therby, shew their bittermost power, amongst whome the rage of Saule chiefly appeareth. But so little is Christes kingdome amongst these rages brought vnder, that rather where it seemed heretofore to be hedged

in, within the narrow walles of Ierusalem, it stretcheth it self now through all Iury and Samaria. And hereof Luke taketh occasion to shew, with what successe, the gospell begonne to be preached out of Iurye. And first he treateth of the conuersion of Samaria, which we reade was foretold of by the prophetes: in the historie whereof we haue the longer to stande, for that the thinges which are most diligently proponed in it, serue greatly both for our comfort, and instruction.

First, he sheweth whose ministry God vsed in conuerting of Samaria. It was Philips, not the Apostle, but he which before was numbred amonge the Deacons, as the auncient writers of the Church with one consent declare, chiefly Epiphanius writing of Simon and the Simoniaces. For although it was the Deacons office to take the charge of the Church goodes, and of the poore: yet they were also permitted to preache the Gospell, when necessitie so required, as hitherto we haue seene, by the example of Steuen. And maye be, there was not so great neede of Deacons at Ierusalem, by reason the congregation was so scattred in the tyme of persecution, and therefore they gaue themselves wholly to the ministerie of the worde, where before they were distributers of the goodes ecclesiastical. And Paule afterward bade, that the Deacons by their well ministring, should get themselves a degre to a greater office and function. Nowe it is reported, that Philip did two things at Samaria. First he preached Christ to them. And that that Luke toucheth briefly in this place, he afterwarde declareth more at large, where he saith, he preached the mysteries of the kingdome of God, and of the name of Iesus Christ. In this place, he maketh mention but of Christ onely, because vnder his name, he comprehendeth the whole Gospell. And Christe hath appoynted the Gospell, to consist of two partes, that is to saue, repentance, and remission of sinnes. Both which Iesus Christ giueth, as Peter before hath manifestly taught. For he alone giueth the spirite of regeneration, and succoureth our corrupt nature. He alone also forgiveth sinnes, and hath purged them with the price of his blood. Therefore he that preacheth Christ, the same of necessitie, must preache repentance and forgiveness of sinnes. And this is a sure note whereby the true preachers may be knowne from the false. For whosoever teache that Iesus Christ is come in the fleshe, and hath performed the things needefull for the amendement and saluation of mankynde, they are to be taken for the true Ministers of Christ. But whosoever sheweth that these thinges be other where to be had than in Christ, and inuenteth newe meanes of attayning to saluation, he is to be called a false teacher, though he were an Angel from heauen. Therefore Paule plainly testifieth, that he knoweth but Iesus Christ only, and receiveth but in his crosse onely. Unto this preaching were ioyned myracles, which Philip wrought, according as Christ had promised. For he draue out vncleane spirites from men, and healed folke sicke of the palsey, whose diseases were incurable. And this working of Christes spirit, was not superfluous. For although by the worde all those thinges are offered vs, which serue to our saluation, yet it is needefull, that our myndes drowned in a certaine naturall slumber be awaked by outward signes, and prepared to receyue the worde. Furthermore, where as diuers thinges fall out otherwise, wherby our fayth is tryed and tempted, it is very profitable, to haue it propped vp, with these outward signes. In the meane season we reade

1. Philip the
Apostle of
Samaria.

1. Tim. 3.

Actes. 5.

1. Iohn. 4.

Galat. 1.

1. Cor. 2.
Galat. 6.

Myracles
wer wrought
by Philip.

Ecc. 1.

that

2. Cor. 3.

Phil. 4.

Iohn. 15.

Iohn. 8.

1. Peter. 5.

Math. 12.

2. The Sa-
maritanes
embrace the
Gospell.

The order of
attapning to
saluation.

Psal. 107.

1. Cor. 3.

Luke. 8.

Math. 13

that such signes were wrought by the Apostles, as for the most part, admo-
nith vs of the benefites of Christ. For he vanquished the force of the Deuil,
ouerthrow his kingdome, and valiantly deliuered vs from his tyrannye.
He hath restored to vs againe, the strength of our corrupted nature, that we
which were able to do no good thing of our selfe, be able through him to doe
all thinges. And he himselfe in the Gospell sayeth, that without him we can
do nothing. But it is very worthy the consideration, where it is sayd the euil
spirites went out of them crying. It is playne that they did the lyke o-
therwheres also. For in Christes presence they complaine that they are dri-
uen out before their tyme, and leaue them miserablye tozne, out of whome
they depart, against their willes. These things set before our eyes, the pro-
perties and disposition of Satan, who is altogether giuen to destroy men. For
as from the beginning he was a murtherer: so he alwayes runneth by and
downe like a roaryng Lion, and seeketh whome he may deuoure. For the
which cause, he bntwillingly departeth out of them, whose myrdes he hath
possessed. Yea being ones cast forthe, he studieth and laboureth to gette into
his olde possession agayne, as Christ teacheth. These thinges as they stirre
by in vs an ardent desire to take heede that we be not circumvented, by the
craft of so hurtfull an enemy, and lose our saluation: so they declare vnto vs
the power of Christ, which by his spirit and worde is able so easily to expell
the Deuill, though he struggle and strue neuer so much against it.

Nowe let vs see howe the Samaritanes receyued Jesus Christ, whome
Philip preached: And the people gaue heede (sayth Luke) vnto those thinges,
which Philip spake with one accorde, hearing and seeing the myracles which
he did. And a little after, There was great ioye in that Citie. In these wordes
the Euangelist comprehendeth two speciall thinges. First, he teacheth that
they receyued Christ, & how they came to the knowledge of him. Then he
sheweth the fruite of this earnestnesse and beliefe. To the first this belon-
geth, where he sayth they hearde Philips sermons, they saw his myracles,
and gaue their mindes and studies to all the thinges he sayde and did. Of
this studie and earnestnesse sprange sayth, which (as we shall afterwarde
heare) they sealed with baptisme. We haue herein to consider the order of
saluation. For although we acknowledge God only to be the authoz hereof,
which worketh in men according to his pleasure: yet for the moste part he
vseth to bring men orderly, and by a certaine rule, to their saluation. In
this order, first is hearing of the worde. For where God offereth vs salua-
tion by the worde, and (as Dauid sayth) sendeth his worde and healeth vs, we
must not neglect the same, if we will be saued. But bicause hearing alone
is not ynough (for wicked men and spirites doe many times heare) it behou-
ueth that our mindes also be moued and stirred. This thing is brought to
passe partly by outwarde thinges, as we see here by signes, and partly by
the inwarde working of the holy spirite, which working if we faele not, it
shall nothing profite vs, to heare the outward preaching or reading of the
worde, as Paule diligently and plainly teacheth. Howbeit, when God re-
uealeth his worde to vs, and pricketh our mindes by the inwarde suggesti-
on of his holy spirite, he requireth earnest attention, and taking heede, least
we let the infernall birdes eate by the seedes out of our minde, or suffer the
same to be choked with thornes, or to be troden vnder of naughtie affecti-
ons, which thing Christ hath faithfully warned vs of. Whosoever there-

fore

foze after this sort procede in the businesse of saluation, as we reade the Samaritanes here did, they shall quickly receyue great profite thereby. And if we compare these things with our doings, we shall perceyue what answere to make them, who marueyle, how it cometh to passe that so few profit by the preaching of the word. For who is it almost, that stumblith not (as they say) at the threschholde, or in the beginning? We see few hearers of the worde at the Church, and they thinke they haue sufficiently done their dutie, if they heare the Sermon vppon Sundaye onely. And fewe there are that heare the same attentiuely, and with desire to learne. But fewest of all muse or meditate diligently, of that they haue hearde. In the meane season, the naughtie affections of the fleshe, beare rule euery where, carying vs headlong vnto the blinde desires of the worlde. Therefore how can it herein otherwyse come to passe, than as in a fiede ouergrowne with thornes, and full of stones, except it be diligently tyled. Let vs cast of this noysome sloth of mynde, and followe the Samaritanes, and then shall that fruite shortly ensue, that Luke sayth they receyued.

For he sayeth: There was great ioye in that Citie. This is the fruite of fayth that bleseth to spring of the feeling we haue of Gods reconcilment with vs. For as the countenance of God being angry with vs, doth bere and trouble our mindes, being feared with the conscience of our sinfulness: so the doctrine of the Gospel, which teacheth that God is reconcyled to vs, in Iesus Christ his sonne, doth marueylously cheere and recreate our spirites. Therefore the Angells when they tolde the shepheardes how Christ was bozne, sayde that they brought them great ioye. And that olde father Simeon, filled with the feeling of this ioye, desired to haue leaue to depart, and to be deliuered from the prison of his body. Paule also byddeth the Christians alwayes to reioyce, bicause this ioye cannot be taken away by any aduersitie, forasmuch as the godly vse to reioyce in afflictions, as we sawe before in the Apostles, which reioyced in that they were thought worthy for Christes sake to be scourged. Therefore they are wicked, and most vnkynde men, that saye the Gospel is the cause of aduersitie and publike calamitie. Whereas it is euident, God sendeth such things bicause of mennes sinnes and disobedience. But they are lyke vnto those which objected the same vnto Ieremie, saying that from the time he beganne to preache, they felt all kyndes of distresse and miserie.

Furthermoze, to returne vnto Luke, there fell out a great hindraunce vnto Christes kingdome, thus luckily succeeding among the Samaritanes. For Simon the sorcerer, which long time had bozne a swinge in that city, had bewitched the miserable people with his magicall Artes. God would haue Philip & his Apostles coped with this Merchant, to thintent partly, that we might knowe, how there will be alway hypocrites in the Church, at whose leuitie and falschode no man shoulde be offended, and partly, that all men might knowe by an euident and infallible argument, that the Apostles wrought their myzacles by no magicall sleightes, but by the power of God, seeing that so famous a Magitian overcome of them, acknowledged in them, a greater power than his was, which power he thought he might with money haue purchased. In lyke sort, woulde God haue the Magitians of Egypt ioyne agaynst Moses. Here it shall be profitable for vs diligently to consider euery person.

The fruite of
the Gospel,
and of fayth.

Luc. 2.

Ierem. 4. 4.

3. Simon Magus hindreth
the course of
the Gospel.

Ecc. ij.

And

Philip an
example of
Christian ba-
liant: &c.

1. Iohn. 4.

Simon Magus
an example of
a seducer.

Eusebius in
his. 2. booke,
and. 13. chap.
Irenus in his
first booke and
20. Chap.

1. Sam. 28.

Deut. 13.

A marke of a
seducer or de-
ceyter.

And first Philip sheweth vs a singuler example of valiaunt fayth. For this Simon was no small hinderance vnto sincere doctrine, bicause the er-
rou of the Samaritanes was confirmed both with antiquitie and super-
stition. For they did not onely thinke, that Simon was indued with heauen-
ly power, but also they beleued he was the very selfe power of God. But
Philip is feared neither with the iuglings of his Magicall enchauntments,
nor with the rooted erro of the foolish people: but rather hath a respect to
Christes comaundement, who bade the Gospell shoulde also be preached in
Samaria. Let them followe such a minde as this, whosoever haue any office
committed vnto them, whether they be publike or priuate persons. For
they must not be afrayde of Bugbeares, which professe Christ, whose po-
wer by so many arguments is proued to be so great. Let vs consider that
he is stronger and greater that is in vs, than he which rageth in the world.

This Simon is a notable ensample of a deceyter, whome a man might
fitly compare with Baalam the false Prophet. It is sayde, that of long time
he had bewitched the people of Samaria. For being skilfull in Magicall sci-
ences, he shewed straunge wonders, and chalenged to himselfe godly ho-
nor, calling himselfe not onely the great power of God, but also God the
father, and the sonne, and Helena his harlot the holy ghost (as Epiphanius,
a most diligent searcher out of olde heresies, hath written.) By this exam-
ple we are taught, that the Deuill is able to doe much by his Ministers,
not of his owne free power, but by the permission of God. For through
Gods sufferance, the Magicians of Egypt, did handsomely imitate cer-
taine of Moses myracles. And the Witch at Saules request seemed to haue
raysed by Samuelles corpes out of the graue. Wherewith may worthily be
numbred the Oracles vttered long agoe at Delphi or Pytheum, although
for the most part, they were doubtfull in their signification. Of lyke kynde
are those things which we reade of Images, whereof some haue spoken,
some haue gone out of their places, and infinit others haue bene notable, by
reason of many myracles: to say nothing of those which were manifest in
the kingdome of Antichrist, as Christ and his Apostles foretolde. God per-
mitteth these thinges by his iust iudgement, partlye bicause of the wicked,
which deserue to be deceyued, whereas they will not imbrace the truth, as
the examples of Pharao and Saule evidently proue: partlye for the elects
sake, whose faith must this waye be tryed, that they maye learne to cleaue
to the simple word of God, and admit nothing contrary to the same, though
it seeme neuer so worthy of authoritie. And hereof the Lord himselfe giueth
vs warning, where he forbiddeth vs in the law to beleue false Prophets,
although they confirmed their doctrine with myracles. For the Lorde your
God (sayeth Moses) tempteth you, to see whether you loue the Lorde your
God with all your heart. &c. Therefore they object myracles to vs in vaine,
which go about to perswade vs in things, varying from Gods worde. See
2. Thes. 2. Math. 24.

Besides, in Simon is set forth a manifest marke whereby a deceyter may
be knowne. For he challengeth to himselfe godly honor, which Satan chief-
ly desireth, to thende to spoyle God of his honor, wherein he farre differeth
from the good Angels, which refuse godly honor being offered them, and
put it ouer vnto God. See Apocal. 19. and. 22. And the faythfull seruants
of God being well remembred of their naturall corruption, be most free
from

from this sacrilegall desire of godly honoz, and giue all the prayse to God, for whatsoeuer they doe well and laudably. Example hereof we haue seene before in Iohn and Peter, and shall hereafter see the lyke in Paule. Therfore let them be driuen from vs, and clapped out of our company, which dare to take vpon them, any, be it neuer so little a pæce of diuine honoz. For he can be no faythfull seruant, that will take vnto him his maisters glozy.

Last of all, we haue in the Samaritanes an example of the inconstancy and lightnesse of the Commons, in that they yelde to this crafty deceyuour, and suffer themselues to be beguiled. This is the propertie of the world, to delite in deceyuers, and to reioyce in deuilers of straunge subtelties. But if there be any hope of neuer so little gayne, yee shall see them, who oughte to depend onely vpon the word of God by and by stricken in a great rage. They that in these dayes seeke after Smoothsayers, to heare tell of thinges lost, or who hath taken them away, giue vs examples of this madnesse. And there be worse than these, which thinke diseases may be put away by incantations, and certaine conceiued formes of wordes, and with costly superstition hyre such as professe such kynd of witchcraft. But the obedience of the Samaritanes being better instructed, deserueth prayse. This it becommeth vs to imitate, and not to giue our studye to curious sciences, which are long since plainly condemned by Gods sentence. See Exod. 22. Leuit. 20. Deut. 18. Mich. 5. God the father hath appointed Iesus Christ to be our teacher and Saviour. Him it behoueth vs to heare, and to doe his commaundement: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glozy, for euer. Amen.

Actes. 14.

The inconstancy of the world.

The. lviij. Homelie.

B V T asloone as they gaue credence to Philips preaching of the kingdome of GOD, and of the name of Iesu Christ, they were baptized both men and women. Then Simon himselfe beleeued also. And when he was baptized, he continued with Phillip, and woondered, beholding the myracles and signes which were shewed. When the Apostles which were at Ierusalem heard say that Samaria had receyued the worde of God, they sent vnto them Peter and Iohn, which when they were come downe, prayed for them that they might receyue the holy Ghost. For as yet he was come on none of them. But they were baptized only in the name of Christ Iesu. Then layde they their handes on them, and they receyued the holy ghost.



Because the kingdome of our Saviour Iesus Christ was to be extended ouer all the world, it was therfore necessary, that the gospell, by the teaching wherof men are brought vnto Christ, should be preached vnto all Nations: whereof we haue seene how the Apostles receyued a commaundement of the Lorde himself, being ready to ascende vp into heauen. The great persecution which Luke sayth beganne at Ierusalem, gaue an occasion of the putting this matter in execution. For where before the tyme of this persecution, the sermons of the Apostles sounded but in Ierusalem onely, the other faithful ministers of Christ beyng thence disperfed, beganne to preach in other places, and had such good successe, that within short space Phillip being come to Samaria,

1. The ap-
pointing of
the Church
at Samaria.

Ephes. 4.

Luc. 10.
Iohn. 13.

1. Thess. 2.

Baptisme is
an outwarde
bande of the
Church.
Iohn. 15.

maria, wanne vnto Christ by his continuall preaching the Gospell, the people of the Citie, which Simon long tyme had bewitched with his Magicall sciences. For they contempning his Magicall conueyaunces, began to giue eare vnto Christ, & to heare him only. And how prosperously they tooke this thing in hand, this present place declareth, which setteth out vnto vs a more full constitution and ordering of that church, and most diligently sheweth the great going forward of those men in fayth and other gifts of the spirite.

First it is declared how they grew into one body of a congregation, where he sayth: Asone as they gaue credence to Philips preaching of the kingdome of God, and of the name of Iesu Christ, they were baptized both men and women. Therefore this place is attributed chiefly to the beliefe which they gaue vnto Philips preaching, in such sort, that they thought his doctrine was confirmed with authorizy inough, by y^e myracles which he wrought. We learne therfore that through fayth, congregations do duely grow in one, & are most strongly knit with an inwarde bande. For this fayth only grafteth vs in Christ Iesu, and maketh vs members of one body in him, as Paule in many places testifieth. Wherevpon we evidently gather agayne, that where men want faith, there can be no church of Christ: for such must nedes be led with most variable and contrary senses and meanings. We are taught by the example of the Samaritanes that the worde of God where men teache, must be beleued, and that it must not be comptrolled by mans reason, so that it shall nedes euery day new authorizy. For as Paule testifieth that the scriptures are inspired of GOD: so the ministerie of the worde instituted of Christ in his church, expressely teacheth the same. Therfore whosoever beleueth the ministers of Christ, bringing Christes voyce and his worde, we may saye he beleueth Christ, and not men. For vnto all suche belongeth this saying of Christ: He that heareth you, heareth me. And whosoever receyueh hym that I sende, receyueh me. Wherefore Paule iudgeth the Thessalonians for this cause worthy to be prayled, for that they receyued his doctrine, not as the worde of a man, but as of an Angell. And the same prayse the Samaritanes deserue, and as many as haue beleued the Gospell, according to their example.

Furthermore, to this inwarde communion consisting of fayth, is ioyned also an outwarde bande of communion or societie. For it is sayd, that all, as well men as women, were baptized in the name of Iesus Christ. For as Christ chose his elect out of the world, so will he haue them separated from the world, and consecrated to himselfe onely. To the which ende, he requirereth of them, a playne confession of their fayth, and furnissheth them wyth sacraments, whereby they be discerned from others. For as the sacraments be no bulgare or common tokens of Christes benefites, and Gods grace: so is there also no small vtilitie in them, in that they separate the people of God from the worlde, and knit them together with the outwarde bande of Christian communion. Which is the cause that where Peter before woulde haue the beleuers to be baptized, he by and by teacheth them also, that they should saue themselves from that froward nation. And Paule by a like argument teacheth that it is not meete, that they that haue bene partakers at the Lordes table, should be also partakers at the sacrifices of Idolles. Here by the way, is the erroze of them reprovued, which accompt the confession of fayth, among thinges indifferent, and suppose that the faythfull are to be

discerned

discreetned from the world, by none outward signe or marke.

Here also is the doctrine of the Anabaptistes to be discussed, who where they lie in this, and such like places, sayth go before Baptisme, would proue hereby that the baptisme of children is condemned. Howbeit this place maketh mention, but such as were of full age, which before were farre of and strangers from the people of God, whome it should haue bene vnlawfull to haue receyued into the communion of the church and sacramentes, without a confession of their faythe, least they myght haue seemed to haue caste pearles vnto dogges and hogges. But the matter is of a farre other sorte in infanten, who being borne of Christian parentes, doe manifestly appertaine to the kingdome of God. For God in the couenaunt, promisseth to be the God of our seede. And Christ sayeth, that the kyngdome of God belongeth vnto children, and plainly testifieth, that they haue fayth. Yea, Paule affirmeth, that the children borne either of father or mother onely, that is a christian, are holy.

Against the
Anabaptists.

Gene. 17.
Math. 18. 19.

1. Cor. 7.

2. Simon be-
leueth, and is
baptized.

Marc. 5.

1. Cor. 1.

Now returneth Luke vnto Simon, that we may vnderstand what he did, when he perceyued the people fell from him, and betooke themselves earnestly vnto Christ. First, Luke sayth, that he beleued. This me thinketh is not to be vnderstanded, as though he counterfeited altogether. For it appeareth, hys mynde was touched with some feeling of fayth, in that he ioyned himselfe to Phillip, as an inseparable companion, and wondered in beholding the miracles and singuler gittes of the holy spirite. Howbeit, because he denied not himselfe, and endeouored not to forsake the flesh, which is the true beginning of christendome, his fayth was but temporall and for a season (as Christ calleth it:) and therefore when the heate of persecution came it coulde not abide. Here appeareth the great power of Iesus Christ, which so easily taketh away the great impediment and hinderance, that Simon was to the course of the Gospell, and so subdueth this great Juggeler, so furnished with the sleighes of Satan, that he which a little before had called himselfe the great power of God, did now adhere and cleaue to Phillip, being a stranger, and one of small account or estimation. Here vnto also belongeth it, that otherwheres Christ driueth out Satan with little or no adoe, so that it euidently appeareth, he is the conqueror of Satan, and most valiant reuenger of mankynde. Further, this is a singuler prayse of the Gospell, through whose playne and simple preaching, the subtile and crafty wisdom both of the world and of the Deuil, is so scornefully confounded. After this, Simon is also baptized, and becommeth a continuall companion of Philip. The chiefe cause whereof may seme to be, for that he desired also to haue like power to worke such myracles as the thinges following declare. Here we be taught, that there shall be alway in the church, false bretherne, which shal either craftily counterfeyt the faith, or else haniing it for a certaine space, fall from it agayne. For the Gospell is compared vnto a nette, wherein are drawne vp, as well naughtye, as good fishe. Let no man therefore be offended, if he perceyue himselfe at any tyme deceyued by such: seeing that Christ had Iudas in hys company, and Paule oftentimes complayneth hymselfe of false brethren. Those men are ouer pearnish and vnpacient, which being deceyued by one or two, dispise therfore all other without difference, and wyll not boushase to take any other for a true christian and brother. We are further taught by the example of Simon, that the grace of God is not tyed to the

the sacramentes: forasmuche as Simon receyued the signe of grace without the feuite. And Paule (although he confesse that the olde fathers receyued the same sacramentes that we doe) yet sayth, they pleased not God, because they were boyde of fayth. And it auayled not Iudas, although he sate at the Lordes table, and receyued the breade at Chyistes owne hande. It is therfore fayth only which grafieth vs into Chyist, and maketh vs partakers of the giftes of God, which are shadowed and represented to vs by the sacramentes.

3. The going
forwarde in
fayth, and in-
crease of the
holy ghost.

Rom. 10.

Galat. 3.

Coloss. 3.

The Apostles
gave the
holy ghost to
the Samaritanes

Now, forasmuch as we haue seene marueylous effects of the holy spirite flourishing in the Church of Jerusalem: Luke teacheth vs that among the Samaritanes also the holy ghost shewed the like power and efficacy, least any man myght thynke that the Church of the Gentyles, was inferiour to the Jewes church. He sayth these giftes were administred by the Apostles, to the ende that the vnitie of the church might the more strongly fasten among the people, which heretofore were of diuers myndes and at variaunce and discention. For howe great a diuision of mindes was betwene the Jewes and the Samaritanes, appeareth both in the fourth of Iohn, & otherwheres. And the Jewes of a certayne proud preiudice, vsed to much to despise the people of Samary. Therefore God thought good, to vse the ministry of the Apostles herein, that it might manifestly appeare, there was but one fayth of Chyist in all churches, and that all the faythfull were quickened but with one spirite, so that there was no difference of Nation in Chyist.

Luke sayth that Peter and Iohn were sent from Jerusalem, who coming to Samaria, prayde for them that had professed Chyist, that the holpe ghost might be giuen vnto them also. The cause of this doyng was, for that the holy Ghost was as yet come vpon none of them, but were only baptised in the name of Chyist. Which place is not so to be vnderstanded, as though the faythfull of the Samaritanes were hitherto vtterly boyde of the holy ghost. For where they had fayth which is the gift and effect of the holy ghost, and were through baptisme planted in Chyist, they coulde not be vtterly boyde of those benefites of Chyist, which by the holy Ghost are sealed in vs. Which are the washing away of sinnes, regeneration, mortifying of the olde man, & adoption, or taking into the children of god. And the whole scripture testifieth, that these thinges come none otherwise vnto vs, than by the operation of the holy ghost. And these are the common giftes of the holy ghost, without the which no man can truly be called a christian. Wherefore it is not lyke, that the Samaritanes lacked these. By the name of the spirite therefore are vnderstanded in this place, those moste excellent giftes, wherein the primitive church flourished, and which were giuen to the belauers in visibill wise, as in the feast of Pentecost we sawe the Apostles were sodenly replete with the holy spirite. These so euident giftes of the holy spirite, in the primitive Church, were needefull to be bestowed as well at Samaria as otherwheres, to the ende that Chyistes kingdome might the farther be spred abroade. And although now adayes these giftes for the more part are ceased, yet this commoditie cometh to vs thereby, that we knowe the holy Ghost is the President and gouernour of Chyistes Church as hee promised.

Actes. 10. 19

Iohn. 14.

The industrie
and modestie
of the Apo-
stles.

In this place we haue to consider the industrie of the Apostles. For as soone as they heare tell that Philip laboureth at Samaria, in the businesse of the

the Lorde, they sende certayne of their company vnderired, to helpe him in his traueyle. And herein appereth no maner of way any doltishe ambition. For they sende Peter and Iohn, whose labors hytherto were more apparant and euident than any others. And they are contented to go being appointed by others, not taking vpon themselves alone, to sende Legates a latere, as they are called. And Philip when they come, doth not disdaine fully reiect them, as thrusting their sickles into an other mannes haruest, and depryuing him of some part of his honor and glorie, but courteously giueth them the place in that Church, whose foundation he had first layde. Whereby we are taught that ioyning of mindes, and mutuall helpe is chiefly to be required in the setting forth of Christes kingdome. But bicause there is no place for these thinges among the ambitious, therefore Christ warneth his disciples so often of humilitie. Whereunto if they were giuen in these dayes, which haue the rule of Churches, they should surely gouerne the Prouinces committed to them, more commodiously than they doe.

A latere, from
their side,
meaning
their entyer
friends, and
counsaillers.

But touching rites and orders, they vse none other ceremonie, than the laying on of handes, which was vsed of Christ, least any man shoulde rashlye arrogate to himselfe power or authoritie to alter or chaunge anye thing. They make their prayers also before, least any one might thinke the holy ghost was bounde to the outwarde ceremonie, but that it was giuen of God, and that all men might perceiue it was obtayned through prayer. And their doynge wanted not a prosperous successe. We knowe that of this place, the Papistes haue brought in their sacrament of Confirmation: but their inuention is so ridiculous, and their temeritie so manifest, that it deserueth no long confutation. It shall be our partes to followe the vnitie of fayth, according to the example of the Samaritanes, that we also may prosperously growe together in Christ Iesu our heade and Sauour: to whome be prayse, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

Prayers are
toynd vnto
the laying on
of handes.

The. lix. Homelie.

WHEN Simon sawe that through laying on of the Apostles handes, the holy ghost was giuen, he offered them money saying: Giue me also this power, that on whome soeuer I put the handes, he may receiue the holy ghost. But Peter sayde vnto him, thy money perishe with thee, bicause thou hast thought that the gift of God may be obteyned with money. Thou hast neither part nor fellowship in this businesse. For thy hart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickednesse, and praye God that the thought of thine heart may bee forgiven thee. For I perceyue that thou art full of bitter gall, and wrapped in iniquitie. Then answered Simon and sayd: Praye ye to the Lorde for me that none of these things which you haue spoken, fall on me.



He Euangelist Luke after the comimon maner of the scriptures, doth not onely describe the prosperous successe of the primitive Church, & the notable examples of the faythfull: but also he sheweth the maners of the false Christians and hypocrites, and the vices that they brought with them into the church. So before this, he declared the hystoꝝy

of Ananias, and the grutch and quarrell which begunne in the Church. And in lyke wise now he declareth the horrible example of Simon, who did contaminate the profession of fayth, with sacrilegall ambition and couetousnesse. The vse of all these things is, that we should vnderstande how there shall alwayes bee hypocrites in the Church, which shall be authours of grievous offences, wherewith the faythfull yet must not be so offended, to thinke that all other therfore ought to be condemned, or else forsake the Church, as we haue seene the Anabaptistes in our dayes doe. This place is worthy to be well considered, which first declareth Simons sinne, next, the earnest reprehension of Peter for the same, and last of all, what Simon thought therof, and howe he tooke it.

1. Simons
sinne.

Luke comprehendeth Simons fault in fewe wordes, saying: when hee saw how through laying on of the Apostles handes, the holy ghost was giuen, he offred them money saying: Giue me also this power, that on whom so euer I laye handes, he may receyue the holy ghost. It was declared before howe Simon beleued, and that wondring at the myracles being so straunge, hee was among others baptized. But he was of their number, which although they will not forsake the desires of the fleche, yet being touched with some feare of God, will not openly strue against him. And these men after a sort for a whyle, cloke the corruption of their minde, but they cannot alwayes lye hidden. And after this sort doth Simon bewraye himselfe, and sinneth two maner of wayes. For first being puffed vp with ambition, he desireth to be lyke vnto the Apostles in dignitie of ministerie, and so arrogateth to himselfe godlye honoz, whyle he coueteth to haue such power giuen vnto him, that he might after his owne will giue the holy ghost vnto men. Nowe vnto ambition, couetousnesse is a companion, wherewith being blinded, hee maketh religion a matter of gayne and lucre, and thinketh he maye make merchandize of the giftes of the holy ghost. For therfore he would buye this power with money, to thintent afterwarde he might make the more gayne of the same. Which was to vnholly a cogitation of God and his giftes, and farthest of from the meaning of Christ, who when he endewed the Apostles with these giftes, sayde: freely you haue receyued, giue freely. This example of Simon teacheth vs, that pryde is the cause of all euill, and (as the wiseman sayeth) the beginning of sinne. This was the cause that made the Angels to fall. And Adam pricked forwarde with pryde, became a transgressour of Gods commaundement, whyle he would (forsooth) be lyke vnto God. Moreouer, dayly examples teach vs, that proude and ambitious men doe nothing right, and that such for the most part, are most pernicious disturbers of publike weales. But whereas the euill of ambition is euery where a pestilent thing, in the Church it is most pestilent of all other. For where it once inuadeth the Church, it soweth the seede of dissention among them, by whose con corde and labour, the peace and tranquillitie of the Church ought to be mainteyned. Examples wherof we haue set forth in Core, Moses enimie, and in the often contentions of the Apostles, the which Christ so many times and so earnestly repressed. But the euill of dissention might seeme but a tryfle (although for the most part it be pernicious in the congregation) if there were not a greater plague ensued, that is to saye, a wicked robbery and mart which ouerturneth all religion, and bseth to plucke mennes myndes wholly from religion. This thing is more
euidēt

Math. 10.

Ecc. 10.

Num. 16.

Mat. 18. 20.

Luke. 22.

euident in Simon, than that it needeth long demonstration. For assoone as he had taken ambition and couetousnesse to counsayle in matters of religion, by and by he descendeth to spirituall merchandise and robbérie. But would God one Simon were herewith flandered, and that we euerywhere sawe not others which offende moze wickedly than he. For after that a certayne earnest zeale and desire of religion, had endowbed the Church wyth great abundaunce of riches, and that Bishops beganne to be had in reuerence and honoꝝ: then beganne Simons not very sincere ledde with the spirite of ambition and couetousnesse, by vnlawfull meanes to aspire to Bishopricks and cathedre dignities. These afterwarde when they had gotten the supremacie, deuised wayes how they might recouer againe, that which they had spent in purchasing of voyces, and hereof was hatched, that flanderous buying and selling of religious matters. These beginninges may we thanke of selling of Sacramentes, of buying of pardons, of hyring of prayers, merites of supererrogation, gaynefull dispensations, buying of buriall places, and whatsoeuer like kinde of inuentions. That a man may marueyle howe the chiefe Bishops of the Church are become so impudent to glozy in the succession of Simon Peter, and so manifestly betraye themselves to be rather the successors of Simon Magus. These men haue reigned many yeares in the Church, vntill the Lorde with the whippe of hys worde began to driue them out. And yet they repent not, but being taken in their owne mischieuousnesse, rather crye out still, that they are the true and lawfull gouernours of the Church. And yet we accuse not them onely, but also lament that among the professors of the Gospell many times such plagues are to be founde. For we see many come to the Gospell, of none other minde, but for that they woulde be fensed vnder this plausible colour, and so most greedily inuade the Church goodes, and most dishonestly abuse them. And many times they meete with Ministers lyke vnto themselves, who hauing gotten by vnlawfull meanes, to haue the rule ouer Churches, can neyther reprove nor keepe vnder these raueners. Therefore the spirit of Simon now a dayes stretcheth the boundes of his kingdome farre and nere, which seemeth to me to be the greatest plague of the Church, whereby it commeth to passe, that they which are as faultie as are the Antichristians, doe little preuaile by preaching of the Gospell.

But let vs see what Peter sayth, who expostulateth with Simon. This is both a most graue and sharpe expostulation, and consisteth of two poynts. First, he accuseth his fault, and denounceth what punishment it deserueth, and figureth or fashioeneth his saying, with an imprecation or kynd of curse, beginning on this wise: Thy money (sayth he) perishe wyth thee: that is to saye: thou and thy cursed money perishe together. The Apostle beginneth on this sort, not of moodynesse of minde, or of any vnbrydeled affection of anger, but moued by the holpe Ghost, which woulde after this phrase and maner of speache, vtter the heynousnesse of his wickednesse and punishment. Therefore such imprecations as these, must be referred vnto a certayne kynde of prophesying, as we see diuers in the Psalmes, and wytyngs of the Prophetes. But the grieuousnesse of his punishment, is moze amplified by the sentence next adioyned, where he sayth: Thou hast no part nor fellowship in this businesse. By which wordes he declareth that he is vtterly excluded from all participation of spirituall giftes, and excommunicated

2. Peter expostulateth with Simon.

out of the Church of the Lorde. And least Peter might seeme causelesse to vse any kynde of rage, he addeth the cause of so cruell threates: bycause thou hast thought that the gift of God maye be obtrayned with money. Which one thing abundantly declareth that thy hart is not right with God, forasmuch as thou thinkest he is lyke vnto couetous merchaunts and vsurers. Hereof is gathered a generall sentence, whereby we are taught, that no such are allowed before God, as make bauntage and gaine of religion, and vnder the colour of religion, seeke their owne lucre. We are taught also by Peters example with what zeale and feruencie of spirite Ministers ought to reprove those which for filthie lucre sake, distayne the glory of God. They must so be handled, that they maye vnderstande howe they haue horribly sinned, and deserued the grieuous punishment of eternall damnation. For there is no place for modestie and mekenesse to be vled where the glory of God is openly assaulted, and where the gifts of Gods grace are made subiect to the gainefull pleasure of most couetous persons. We reade therfore that Elizeus vled the lyke zeale towarde Giezi his naughtie seruant, whom he sodainly strake with the plague of leprosie, because he required of Naaman the Assirian, a rewarde for that health that was freelye giuen him of God. And Iesus Christ a most perfite paterne of mekenesse, was so moued with that impious sale of holynesse, that he layde hands on the authors of such wickednesse, and draue them out of the Church with a whippe lyke impudent Dogges. We may therfore iustly complayne of their iniustice in these dayes, that say we offende agaynst the rules of Christian modestie and charitie, when we accuse the Antichrist at Rome, and his Creatures, the Cardinals, Bishops, Monkes, and Priestes, which by reason of their wicked and prophane fayer or Mart these many yeres, haue caused Christs religion to be mocked and scorned of the Jewes and Turkes, and yet to this daye haue no serious or earnest thought, of any reformation or amendement, notwithstanding they be euery where spoken against. But it is the perpetuall and euerlasting decre of God, appoynted by his Prophete, that in his house there shoulde be no dwelling for Chanaanites, that is to saye, for such kinde of merchaunts.

Moreover, it is worthy to be noted how Peter by a graue sentence condemneth not onely Simon, but also Simons money. Therfore what thing so euer seruethe the wicked against the glory of GOD, is accursed as well as they. So, that money wherewith kyng Balaac would haue hyred Balaam, to haue hindred Gods appointment, towarde his people, is called the rewarde of iniquitie. And the money for the which Iudas solde Christ, appeareth to haue bene accursed because Iudas could neyther long enioy it, neyther serued it the priestes, for any other vse, than to purchase them a perpetuall blot and memorie of their bloudie impietie. What neede we to speake of the goodes and reuennes of Monasteryes, whereof a great part (as appeareth) was gathered together by Simoniacall sleighes, of such persons as vled to sell all thinges in Religion. For it is as clere as the day light, that these goodes are so unhappie, that commonly, they are a stumbling stone to them, whome the Gospell hath shined vpon, while they are more earnestly busied in getting them into their handes, than in setting forth of Christs glorie. So unhappie & vnprosperous is this mischienous simonie. And that that is here sayde of these goodes may iustly be vnderstanded and

verified

2.Reg.5.

Iohn.2.
Math.21.
Mar.11.

Zach.14.

The riches
of the wicked
are accursed.

2.Pet.2.

verified of all goddes bniustly gotten, of the which, this is the propertie, that they procure vnto the owners of them the horrible malediction and curse of God. For the saying of the Lorde is well knowne. Wo to him that hourdeth vp the things that be none of his.

Habac. 2.

In the seconde part of his Oration, Peter exhorteth him to repentance, whereby he plainly putteth him in comfort of pardon. For to what ende should one repent or conuert, which should thinke his doing therein vnprofitable? Here it appeareth what the ende and marke of all reprehensions in the Congregation ought to be, truely, that men might turne from their sinnes, and be reconciled vnto God, which marke, vnlesse it be obserued, the libertie of rebuke and reprehension shall nothing differ, from euill speaking or rayling. Wherefore, least Simon shoulde suspect Peters wordes hereof, he addeth. Repent of this thy wickednesse, and pray God, that the thought of thine heart may be forgien thee. He mencioneth his thought, that the heynousnesse of his fault might appeare the more, the cogitation wherof ought to be farre from a chrissten mannes minde. And here by the way we learne, that men sinne not onely in deedes, but also by thoughts and desires. For where men ought to be giuen vnto God, both in bodie and soule, it deserueth to be called sinne, if we swarue neuer so little from the obedience of God. Herevnto belong the things which Christ speaketh in Mathew the fift Chapter, touching the exposition of the lawe. Furthermore, for that he would pearce Simons minde the deeper, whome he perceyued to be grievously tempted by the deuill, he toucheth the fountaynes & rootes of sinne, thereby shewing, that he hath neede earnestly to repent. Wherevnto this is to be referred, which he sayde, in a maner doubtingly: If happily the thought of thine heart may be forgien thee. But now he addeth. For I perceyue that thou art full of bitter gall, and wrapped in iniquitie. In the first member or part, he alludeth to that saying of Moses, where the Israelites are commaunded to beware of themselves, least there be among them, some roote that beareth gall and wormewood. He noteth the inward malice or corruption of y^e minde, which causeth whatsoeuer men doe to be bitter and displeasing vnto God. For as the true worshipper of God, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth out that is good: so the vngodly bring nothing but that that is wicked out of the euill treasure of their hart, such as in deede Christ sayth polluteth men. And by this wrapping or binding, is expressed y^e state of them, which being intangled, in the snares of sinne, cannot vntwine themselves, without much a doe, and feruent zeale of repentance. He teacheth vs that Simon is in such a condition or case, that he shoulde thinke a colde and superfluous shewe of repentance as not sufficient.

Deut. 19.

Math. 22. 15.

This place teacheth vs whether sinners ought to be sent: verily vnto God, with whome vnlesse they be made at one, there can be no hope of their saluation. Therefore, we see in the Prophetes, this one thing still repeated, that the people should conuert, and returne vnto God, from whom by sinne, they had strayed. But for the more commodious doing hereof, it becometh to obserue two things, both which Peter prescribeth vnto Simon. The first is the worke of repentance, which as we haue elsewhere taught, comprehendeth acknowledging of our sinne, contricion of heart, and amendment of our whole lyfe. The other consisteth in godly prayers, whereby we aske forgiveness of our sinnes, because the same is a free gift, and cometh

The ende of
reprehensions
in the
Church.

Sinners
must be sent
vnto God.

commeth not through any merites of our workes. But Christ alone worketh them both, who by his spirite, both regenerateth the beleuing, and by the merite of his death, washeth away our sinnes, & reconcyleth the father vnto vs againe. Therefore all the order of our saluation consisteth in sayth, whereby we take holde of him. Therefore aboue all things, it behoueth to vze or require sayth, not a deade sayth, such as Hypocrites bragge of, but a liuely and effectuell power of the spirite, whereby it commeth to passe, that we both liue in Christ, and he by his spirite, worketh in vs. For this onely grace of God certifieth the wauering conscience of man, and bleth to bring forth in vs, most plentiful frutes of true Godlinesse.

3. Howe Simon tooke Peters exposition.

Howe, how did Simon take this graue and wholesome exhortation: His wordes declare that he was stricken in conscience and mynde. For he sayth: Praye yee for me vnto the Lorde, that none of these things, which you haue spoken, fall on me. It seemeth he commendeth himselfe to the prayers of the congregation: but it is a manifest argument of distrust, that he sayeth nothing of himselfe, but thinketh he may be holpen onely with the prayers of other. But in vaine are the prayers of others, vnlesse we returne our selues vnto the Lorde. This the places of the Prophets teache vs, where we are forbidden to pray for them that are wicked, and will not repent. See Ierc. 7. 14. 15. Ezech. 14. Therefore the error of them is peruerse, and noysome, which think they may be relieved with the hyred prayers of Monkes and Priestes, where they themselues, holde on in their wickednesse, and where the prayers they murmur in a straunge tongue, are many tymes not vnderstanded of the Monkes that mumble them. We knowe that the prayers of the saythfull are effectuell, whereby they commend vnto God the traueyles and burthens of their brethren, seeing that Paule desireth to be relieved by them. But these prayers take place for them, whose selues are mindefull of their duetie, and with constant sayth watch for their owne saluation. Let vs therefore be mindefull of these thinges, and praye earnestly that we be not blinded with the affections of ambition and couetousnesse, and so lose our saluation, but that we may serue God in sinceritie of heart, and attaine vnto saluation, in Iesus Christ our Lorde: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glorie, for euer. Amen.

Rom. 15.
Ephes. 6.

The. lix. Homelie.

AND they when they had testified and preached the worde of God, returned toward Ierusalem, and preached the Gospell in many Cities of the Samaritanes. The Aungell of the Lorde spake vnto Philip saying: Arise and go toward the South, vnto the way that goeth downe from Ierusalem vnto the Citie of Gaza, which is in the Desert. And he arose and went on. And beholde, a man of Aethiopia, a Chamberlane, and of great authoritie wyth Candace, Queene of the Aethiopians, and had the rule of all hir treasure, came to Ierusalem for to worship. And as he returned home againe, sitting in his Chariot, he read Esay the Prophete. Then the Spirite sayde vnto Philip: go neere, and ioyn thy selfe vnto yonder Chariot. And Philip ranne to him, and he hearde him reade the Prophete Esaye, and sayde, vnderstandest thou what thou readest? And he sayde, how can I, except I had a guide? And he desired Philip that he woulde come vp, and sit with him.

Because



Because God hath appointed Jesus Christ his sonne, to be the vniuersall Saviour of the whole worlde: therefore it behoued that the Gospell also wherin is contayned the way of saluation, purchased by him, shoulde be preached among all Nations. Howe this was done, Luke declareth in this Chapter. He beginneth with the conuersion of Samaria, which Christ himselfe expressly commendeth vnto the Apostles, as we haue seene in the Historie of his Ascention. And thither came Philip, and first sowed the seede of Euangelike doctrine and sayth. Shortly after the Apostles being sent thither, gaue vnto them that were alreadye baptised in the name of Christ, the gyftes of the holy spirite, which thing was the occasion of the adoe that they had with Simon Magus. The beginning of this present place appertayneth to the hystorie of the conuersion of Samaria, wherevnto after is ioyned a newe discourse, declaring howe the knowledge of Christ came vnto the Aethiopians.

And first Luke meaning to conclude his former narration, proposeth in fewe wordes, what the Apostles did furthermoze at Samaria, saying: When they had testified and preached the worde of God, they returned to Ierusalem, and preached the Gospell in many Cities of the Samaritanes. In the which wordes the Apostles are sayde to haue done thre things. First, they beare witnesse of Christ, whom Philip had preached. Therefore they fulfill the office wherevnto Christ appoynted them, when he commaunded them to be his witnesses. Then they preached the worde of GOD, not the deuises of their owne head. And herein also they haue a respect vnto Christes commaundement, who charged them to preach the things which he commaunded them. Thirdly, in their returne, they pretermitt not the inferior places, but preach Jesus Christ euery where in the Townes and Villages. This is an argument of a great and feruent zeale, wherewith they being inflamed, thinke they ought to let slip no occasion, that may serue to set forth the kingdome of God. In these thinges are most fully set forth the dutie of the Ministers of the worde, and of the congregation. Let the Ministers remember that they be not onely Preachers, but also witnesses of Christ. And it is the propertie of witnesses to say the truth, and boldly and without feare to speake that they knowe. And he shall be called no faythfull witness, that for fauour of men, or any other affection, shall obscure or hide the truth. Moreouer, let them know, that the worde of God is committed vnto them, whereof the Lorde hath made them Preachers, and not Authours of newe opinions. Therefore let them thinke that spoken to them, that is sayde to Ezechiel, who is commaunded to take his wordes, from the mouth of the Lorde. And let them not thinke it is graunted them, to ioyne theyr gloses vnto Gods worde. For what hath chaffe to doe with corne? Howbeit, in all these thinges, is required a certaine zeale, wherewith if they be not inflamed, they shall doe no great good. Therefore let them imitate Christ, which we see euery where sought occasion to teach and to preach. And Paule sayth, he fashioned himselfe in all thinges to all men, to winne many vnto Christ.

Nowe, vnto these premisses Luke ioyneth a newe hystorie, as we be-

fore

1. What
the Apostles
did beside at
Samaria.

Iohn. 15.
Actes. 1

Math. 28.

Ezech. 3.

Ierem. 23.

1. Cor. 9.

1. The hysto-

rie of the con-
uerterd Eus-
nuche.

fore sayde, wherein he telleth vs howe the doctrine of the Gospell came into Aethiopia by the ministerie of one man, but such an one as we shall thinke laboured not in vaine, bicause he was of great authoritie among the people. And here is most manifestly fulfilled that that was long agoe prophesied by the Prophete, touching the subduing and bringing of the Aethiopians vnto the kingdome of Christ. See the Psalmes, lxxij. lxxij. & lxxxvij. Nowe, bicause this hystorie conteyneth an ensample of true conuersion, it grieued not the godly writer to declare all the circumstances thereof. And first he treateth of Philip, whose ministerie it pleased God herein to vse. After that, he diligently describeth the Aethiopians person, who was conuerted vnto the fayth of Christ. And last of all, he beginneth to declare what Philip and he did being together.

The specis-
all calling
of Philip.

In Philip by whose meane the Aethiopian was conuerted, we haue two things to note. The speciall calling wherby God appointed him to this businesse, and his obedience in following Gods calling. It was a very singular vocation, forasmuch as it was a thing of no small importaunce, which God had appoynted to be done. For the Angell of the Lorde appeareth vnto Philip, and instructeth him diligently what to doe: Aryse (sayeth he) and get thee towarde the South, vnto the way that leadeth from Ierusalem vnto Gaza, &c. And although the Angell doth not plainly declare what he shoulde there doe, yet it was easie for Philip to coniecture, that he was appoynted to some great and heavenly businesse. This place teacheth vs by the way, the dignitie of the Gospell, forasmuch as we heare, that Philip is called to the preaching thereof by an Angell. For where God hath appointed the Angells as the Apparitoies or Bedels of his maiestie, whome he sendeth out for the saluation of his elect (as Paule witnesseth to the Hebrues the first chapter) it must needs be some great and excellent matter that is to be done by their ministerie & seruite. We learne also, that the beginning of our saluation ought to be referred to the mere grace and fauour of God. For as God in this place, appoynteth to the Eunuche, nothing thinking hereof, a preacher of saluation: so molte times, when we thinke least of it, he vseth to bring vnto vs the doctrine of saluation. Which grace of God we ought so to acknowledge, as to attribute nothing ouer arrogantly to our selues in that matter, that may any thing blemishe or deface the maiestie of Gods grace.

The obedi-
ence of Phi-
lip.

The obedience of Philip deserueth singular prayse, which neyther re- pyleth vpon the Angell, nor curiously enquireth why he so commaundeth him, but without al delay, goeth on to the place he was commaunded, com- mitting all the successe of the matter to God which commaunded him. Let vs thinke that the lyke obedience is required of vs, least whyle we call Gods commaundements to the account of our reason, we first become foo- lishe tryflers and lyngerers, and then after that, rashe and heady transgres- sors. And as oft as the Lorde shall simply commaunde any thing, not ren- dyng any reason why he so commaundeth, so often let vs thinke he tryeth our obedience, and let vs with his general promises be encouraged to go about it, where he promiseth most prosperous successe to those that walke in hys commaundements. An example of this diligence is to be seene in Abraham, who being commaunded to go out of his countrie, thought good to obey the calling of the Lorde, though he were altogether ignorant what should fo-

Gen. 12.

lowe

lowe thereof. Which thing as it most prosperously succeeded with him: so we reade that Saule was tangled in horrible calamities, who had rather followe the deuises of his owne reason, than the commaundementes of God. See Samuel, 1. 13. and 15. Chapter.

But let vs consider the Aethiopian, who is so diligently described. First he declareth his state and condicion, in that he sayth he was an Eunuch, by which name it appeareth the Courtiers of the Kinges and Quænes of the East were called, and specially those that were of their Chamber, although they were not all gelded. Wherefore it maketh for the exposition of thys name, that he calleth him (*Αὐδῶς* *αὐ*, that is to say) a prince, and one that had the charge of all the Quænes treasure, whome we may call the Cofferer, or Lorde Treasurer. Whereby it plainly appeareth, that he was none of the inferiour Courtiers, but one of the chiefe of the Court. This place teacheth vs that Magistrates and officers ought not for their office sake which they susteyne, to bee excluded from the Kingdome of Christ, as the seditious Anabaptistes crie. For Paule plainly testifieth, that such are the Ministers of God. And there are examples of manye, which whyle they were in office, were illuminated with the knowledge of Christ, and for all that, were not commaunded to giue up their office. Of this number was Ioseph a Senator of Jerusalem, whome the Euaungelistes write was a Disciple of Christ, and of godly affection buried Christ. So Peter bade not Cornelius to giue up his Captaineship. And it was lawfull for Sergius Paulus after he was conuerted vnto Christ to continue in the Proconsulshippe of Cyprus. Therefore most bayne are the clamours of the Anabaptistes, where they stiffely denie, that Christian men ought to beare any office.

Then he declareth the maners and studie of the Aethiopian, by two arguments. For he sayth he went up to Jerusalem for to worshop, and as he iourneyed, was giuen to reading of the Scripture. Therefore although he were an aliant and straunger, yet he had some vnderstanding of that true God, which befoze time woulde chiefly be knowne in Iurie, as the Prophete witnesseth. Neyther must we say, that he was deceyued through foolish superstition, and so included and tyed religion to certaine places. For where he was studious of the Scriptures, he reuoked externe worshipping to the rule of Gods worde, which is the onely waye of true religion, and vndoubtedly he respected the promise of God, who long befoze had promised in that Church to heare the prayers aswell of Straungers, as of Iewes. The reason of which promise was founded on Iesus Christ, a figure of whom aswell the Temple was, as the sacrifices made in the same. The example of this Eunuch teacheth vs what the studies of Princes and great men ought to be. Let them remember that they shoulde principally and aboue all things haue a care of religion. Now, let them not appoynt the same after their owne brayne, (as we reade sometyme Ieroboam did, for the establishment of his tyrannie) but according to Gods worde, which it becometh them both to heare and reade moste diligently. For it was befoze declared, that they be the Ministers of God. He hath appoynted them to be the Nourices of his Church, as the prophet sayth, *Esa. 49.* He himselfe is in the middle of their Sessions, and iudgementes. And to him shall they hereafter giue an account of their administration, which they neuer can wel doe, vnlesse they being enflamed with the desire and loue of religion, think

The description of the Aethiopian Eunuch.

A Printer.

Rom. 13.

Actes. 10.

Actes. 13.

His maners, and vsage, or studie.

Psal. 76.

1. Reg. 8.

1. Reg. 12.

Esa. 49.
Psal. 81.

Deut. 17.

that they ought aboue all thinges to followe the worde of God. For thys cause the king in tymes past was commaunded to haue an abridgement of the lawe, and to be continually exercised in reading of the same. And surely it appeareth, that all those Princes which haue deserued any prayse before God, were most studious of these things, such as were Dauid, Salomon, Asa, Ezechias, Iosias, and after the Apostles time, Constantinus, Theodosius, Carolus, and diuers others, of whose godlynesse, the foundations of Churches and Colledges, now a dayes euerywhere beare witnesse. If the princes in these daies were occupied in the same studies, and as many as beare rule and authoritie, Christian affayres shoulde better prosper and goe forward. But bicause blinde concupiscence, the madde desire of dyng, sumptuous banquetting, immoderate hunting and hauking, contempt of Gods worde and his sacraments, and insatiable desire of warring and fighting, are comen in their place: nothing can be hoped for at these Princes, that may serue eyther for the publike weale, or reformation of the Church, and glozy of God.

Philip is appointed to teach this Eunuch.

Vnto these thinges Luke ioyneth what Philip and the Aethiopian dyd. For Philip is commaunded to ioine himselfe neare vnto the Chariot, and now the holy spirite offreth an occasion of well doing, although Philip till this time sawe none. For as he drew neare, he heard the Eunuch reading alowde a notable place of Esaye the Prophete, concerning Christ, and streyght waye being moued by the spirite, he demaundeth whether he vnderstande the place. Here some men might thinke Philip of small ciuilltie, which being not called, woulde approche so nere to a man of authorities Chariot, and would aske such a question of one whom he knew not, as manifestly bpbayded him with ignorance. But whereas he had betaken himselfe wholly vnto God, he diligently fulfilleth all that God commaunded, not regarding the doltish reasons of the flesh. And that which he doth after the commaundement of god prosperously succedeth. For he findeth notable tokens of great modestie and humanitie, in the noble man, though he were a stranger, who hauing iust occasion disdainefully to haue reiected Philip, as is the gypse of great and rich men, yet he modestly confesseth his ignorance, and bicause he was moued by the secrete instinct of the spirite, to thinke well of Philip, biddeth him to come bp vnto him, and taketh him as an expositor of the Scripture which he read. Verily this noble man deserueth singuler prayse, whyle he is neyther puffed bp with the affiance of his owne witte, neyther refuseth a straunge interpreter, neyther disdayneth the Scriptures, the most part whereof he perceyued to be more difficult than he coulde easily vnderstande. But God alloweth such hearers of hys worde, as being endued with humble myndes, doe reuerently tremble at his worde. In the meane season we are taught, that the Scriptures ought to be opened by Expositions and interpretations. And God vttereth those interpretations by men, which being illuminated with his spirit, by comparing of Scriptures together, and obseruing the proprietie and proportion of fapth, picke out the true meaning and sense of the same. Which gift Paule numbzeth amongst the chiefe. Therefore they are ouer piewish which looke for reuelations from heauen, and lyke Doltes, wickedly despyse the ministerie of the Church. Let vs followe the godlynesse of this Eunuch, his modestie, humilitie, and feruent desire of saluation. For so it shall come to passe,

Esay. 66.

1. Cor. 12. 14
Eph. 4.

pass, that we also shall attayne to true saluation in Iesus Christ: to whom be prayse, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The.lxx.Homely.

THE tenour of the Scripture which he read was this: Hee was ledde as a sheepe to be slayne, and lyke a Lambe dumbe before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth. Bicause of his humblenesse, he was not esteemed. But who shall declare his generation? for his lyfe is taken from the earth. The Chamberlane aunswered Philip and sayde: I praye thee of whome speaketh the Prophete this, of himselfe, or of some other man? Philip opened his mouth, and beganne at the same scripture, and preached vnto him Iesus.



The Euangelist Luke diligently describeth the hystorie of the Aethiopian conuerted vnto Christ; aswell for many other causes, as for that it conteyneth an ensample of true conuersion, whereby we are taught howe God dealeth with vs, when he mindeth to receyue vs into the societie of saluation. first, Luke sheweth howe God is the cause efficient of this conuersion, who of his mere fauour sent Philip, throughe whose ministerie, the Eunuch of Aethiopia shoulde be conuerted. The same God, as he chose vs all before the foundations of the worlde were layde, without any respecte had to our good workes: so by his grace he ministereth vnto vs, and giueth vs when we thinke nothing thereof, all thinges belonging to our saluation. Next, Philip is an instrument of this conuersion, whose helpe God here vseth, according to his custome. For where our infirmities is notable to abyde the maiestie of God, he ordeyneth that we shall be taught and ledde by the ministerie of men, which is a speciall argument of Gods goodnesse towarde vs, and therefore is euerywhere first accounted among the benefites of God. The instrument that Philip vseth, is the worde of God, not such an ineffable and imaginary worde, as certayne Seraphicall and fanaticall snatterers in Diuinitie suppose, but the verie same worde that is conteyned in the Scriptures. For out of these must all sermons, and the whole doctrine of saluation be taken; neyther must we looke for any newe kynde of doctrine vnto this day. Amongst all these thinges, the mynde of the Eunuch so well disposed to receyue the truth, and doctrine of saluation, is notable. That he was studious of religion, the long iourney that he toke, both full of traueyle and daunger, doth abundantly declare. His desire to learne, his diligent reading of the Scripture, and that he woulde take vnto him a man vnknowne, of whome he hoped for a more full instruction, proueth. All which thinges it is manifest he had throughe the grace of God, bicause these thinges vse to appere in no man, vnlesse he be indued with some singular illumination of the spirite. Next let vs see what thing they doe whyle they are together, which Luke in this place describeth, repeating worde by worde the place of Esaye, which gaue occasion to Philip, to reason with the Aethiopian touching Christ and hys saluation.

The place of
Esay. 53.

In his Preface
vpon E-
say to Paula
& Eustachium
In his first
preface to his
Commenta-
ries vpon
Esay

In his Epi-
stle to Pauli-
nus the priest
vpon all the
bookes of the
Byble.

1. Christ died
of his owne
will.

Math. 20.

John. 10.

Phil. 2.

This place is in the. liij. Chapter, neyther is there any other place, that more evidently comprehendeth the misteries of Iesus Christ: so that Ie-rome not without a cause iudgeth the Prophete Esay, worthe to be num-bered rather among the Euangelistes, than the Prophets. In the meane while Gods prouidence is to be considered, which gouerneth mennes af-fayres, and suffereth nothing by hazarde to come to passe: whereof we haue an euident argument, bicause euen at the very same tyme, that Philip beginneth to talke with the Aethiope, Luke sayth he was reading of that be-rie place. An Ethnick or Infidell, would impute this thing vnto fortune or chaunce. But we acknowledge the prouidence of God, which doth not one-ly giue all things their successe, but also ruleth all other thinges appertay-ning to the same. For how should he neglect mens matters, be they neuer so small, which numbzeth the heares of our heades, fardeth the byzdes of the ayre, and singularly decketh the flowers of the fielde: Furthermore, touching the place of Esaye, it comprehendeth in it the whole summe of our redemption. For it declareth the mysterie of Christes death, and the victorie whereby he is entered in the glozie of his father, and hath gotten an im-mortall and eueralsting kingdome. It shall be good to consider euery thing in the order as it is declared.

First, he setteth forth the death of Christ in these wordes. He was ledde as a sheepe to be slaine, and like a lambe dumbe before his shearer, so he opened not his mouth. By these wordes he doth not onely set forth the patience of Christ, which as at many other tymes, so in his passion and death appeared most perfite: but also he teacheth that he took his death of his owne accord and willingly, so that the counsaile or force of his enemies wrought not the same. In dede the Scribes and Phariseys took counsaile agaynst him, Iudas sought all meanes busily to betraye him. The high Priestes in theyr counsaile pronounced him guiltie of death. Pilate caused him after he was whipped, to be nayled on the Crosse. But what could all these haue done, if he would haue vttered or shewed the strength of his diuine power and ma-iestie: Yea, who pulled him downe, from his fathers bosome to the earth: By whose counsaile, took he fleshe and manhowde, in the Virgines wombe: Who gaue them strength to rise againe, which were sent out a- gaynst him, and fell to the ground at one worde spoken of hym: These thinges therefore teach vs, that he dyed, bicause it was his pleasure to die, forasmuch as he came into the worlde for none other cause, but for that he would giue his life for the life of the worlde. Therefore where he was able most valiantly to haue resisted the enterprises of his enemies, he would yet be led to his death like a sheepe and a lambe, so that he would not seeme, no not in worde, to vtter any token of an impatient minde, and vntwilling to die. Here vnto appertayneth that that is sayde in the Gospell. Therefore doth my father loue me, bicause I put my life from me, that I might take it a- gaine. No man taketh it fro me, but I put it away of my selfe. I haue power to put it from me, and I haue power to take it againe. And Paule expounding these sayings, sayth: He became obedient to his father, euen to the death of the Crosse, and tooke vpon him the shape of a man, being in the shape of God. Now these thinges serue partly for our redemption and saluation, and partlye for our instruction. For thus it behoued that our sinne of disobedience, should be done away, which made vs subiect to eternall damnation. More-

ouer,

ouer, Christ taught vs by hys example, patience and obedience in bearing the Crosse, as he admonisheth vs oft tymes in the Gospell. And Peter wyrteth thus to the same purpose: Christ suffered for vs, leauing vs an example, that we should follow his steppes, which did no sinne, neyther was there any guyle founde in his mouth, which when he was reuyled, reuyled not agayne, when he suffered, he threatened not.

Howbeit, the Prophete ioyneth vnto the death of Christ, the victorie which he gate by hys death, saying: Bicause of hys humblenesse, he was not esteemed. By the name of humblenesse is vnderstanded the state of the crosse and of death, whereby it appeareth that he was outwardly humbled or brought downe. This is therefore the meaning of his wordes: where he seemed altogether oppressed and destitute of helpe, God of his iust iudgement reuenged hys cause, and declared he was the Conquerour of death and of Satan, although he seemed conquered. Thys agreeth with the first promise, where it is sayde, the Serpent shoulde sting Christ in the heele, but that Christ should treade vpon his heade. The same did Dauid prophesie should come to passe, where he sayth: He shall drinke of the brooke in the way, therefore shall he lift vp his head. For where by the merite of his death he purged our sinne, and toke it away: he also spoiled and disarmed death which by reason of sinne, had power vpon vs. Shortly after, being risen from death, he openly declared, that death and the Deuil had no power vpon him: wherefore he most gloriously triumphed ouer all his enemies. And thys is that glory which he desyeth hys father so often to gyue hym. The consideration hereof is verie necessarie. For it serueth for the confirmation of our sayth, that we be not offended neyther at Christs crosse, nor our owne. For as Christ by the Crosse entred into the glorie of his father, and dyed, and was raysed agayne from death for our sake, to declare he was a Lord and sauour, as well of the quick as of the dead: so we by death ouercome, and whether we lyue or dye we be the Lords. And as God reuenged Christs cause, although he seemed altogether oppressed: so he vseth to defende and preserue the memorie of them that be hys, that their godlynesse, who now are punished by shamefull deathes as wicked men, & malefactours, may be knowne to them that come after them. Wherevnto are to be referred the examples as well of the Prophets, as the Apostles.

Moreover, after victorie followeth a kingdome, to the which he attybuteth an euerlastingnesse and vnspokeable power, saying: But who shall declare his generation? Thys worde generation, according to the blage of the Hebrues, is taken as well for the age of a man, as for his posteritie. Both these declare the contynuall enduring of his kingdome. For the Angell testifieth that his kingdome is euerlasting, where he sayth vnto Mary: Of his kingdome shall be none ende. Likewise Christs posteritie is euerlasting. For they which by him are made the children of God, shall neuer fayle. And as there shall be alwayes vpon the earth, such as he shall acknowledge, for the sonnes of God, and coheyes with him: so they being taken out of this worlde, shall liue and reigne for ever with him. For this is the effect and summe of his last will, which before his death, he would haue his father to ratifie. Father, I will that they which thou hast giuen mee, bee with me where I am, that they may see my glorie, which thou hast giuen mee. Touching them both, the holy ghost teacheth vs by the Prophete, saying:

The

1. Pet. 2.

ii. Christ by death got the victorie.

Genes. 1.

Psal. 110.

1. Cor. 15.
Colos. 3.Iohn. 12. 13.
and. 17.

Rom. 14.

Psal. 34.

iii. Christs kingdome is eternall and inuincible.

Luke. 1.

Iohn. 17. 14.

Psal. 89.

Math. 28.

1. Cor. 15.

Rom. 8.

iii. Death is
the entry into
Christes
kingdome.

Phil. 2.

1. Cor. 15.

2. Tim. 2.

Rom. 8.

The zeale of
the Eunuch
being yet

The seede of Dauid shall endure for ever, and his seate is like as the Sunne before me. He shall stand fast for euermore as the Moone, and as the faythfull witnesse in heauen. And this is that thing wherein Christes kingdome differeth from all the kingdomes of the worlde. For they all shall perishe, neyther remayneth any of those auncient and riche Monarchies, and they which remayne and flourish this day, doe evidently portend their ruine and decay. Hereof may two things be gathered, the knowledg wherof is very profitable. First the perpetuities of everlasting continuance of Christes church, which being assaulted from the beginning of the worlde, endureth yet vntill this present day, and shall endure euen vntill the ende of the worlde, as he hath promised. By which argument we may comfort our selues, against all the assaultes of Tyrannes. Next, the certaintie of eternall life dependeth hereon, without the which it is most vaine that is written of fayth and religion, as Paule disputing of the resurrection from death hath taught. For if Christes posteritie be ineffable, and therefore eternall, then must there be an other life after this, to say an heauenly and an eternall. And so it remayneth both firme and stable that Paule sayth, that neyther life, nor death, can seporate vs from the loue of God.

But because the things be of most importaunce, and weight, which he speaketh of Christes victorie and kingdome, he repeateth the cause of them againe, which is: For his life is taken from the earth. What can be more absurde, if we consider the iudgement of the fleshe? He sayde Christ should be a conquerour, and raigne for ever. And he alleageth the cause of his victorie and kingdome to be, for that his life should be made away vpon the earth. But we haue declared before, that this thing agreeth with the first promise. And Paule is a most faythfull Interpretour of this place, where he sayth, Iesus Christ, when he was in the shape of God, thought it no robbery to be equall with God. Neuerthelesse he made himselfe of no reputation, taking on him the shape of a seruaunt, and became like vnto men, and was found in his apparell as a man, hee humbled himselfe, and became obedient vnto the death, euen the death of the Crosse. Wherefore God hath also exalted him, and giuen him a name, which is aboue all names, that in the name of Iesus, euery knee should bowe, both of things in heauen, and things in earth, and that all tongues shoulde confesse, that Iesus Christ is the Lorde, vnto the prayse of God the father. These things serue for our consolation, that we be not offended at death. For as it behoued Christ should be taken from the earth, to obteyne the victorie, and a kingdome in heauen: so is it impossible, that we shall lyue and reigne in heauen, vntill we also chaunge this present life for the eternall. For as Paule sayth: This corruptible bodie, must put on incorruptibleness, and this mortall must put on immortalitye. And to be short, such is the reason of our societie with Christ, that we can enter into life none other way, than by death, wherby he entered. Whereupon the Apostle sayth: If we dye with him, we shall liue with him. If we suffer with hym, we shall also raigne with him. For God will haue vs like to his sonne, that they that suffer with him, may also be glorified with him. And thus much touching the exposition of the place of the Prophet which the Eunuch had in his handes. Let vs now see howe vpon this occasion, the Actiope attayned vnto the knowledg of Christ. For where a little before, he confessed his ignorance, now he enquireth of the true sense of the place. I praye thee

(sayth)

(sayth he) of whome speaketh the Prophete these things? This is an Argument of a great zeale, that he that was to be honoured as a great man of dignitie, becommeth as it were a suter and a suppliaunt to a man of no estimation, and hitherto vnknoone, to the ende he would learne the true meaning of that scripture. In the meane season it is not to be negligently passed ouer, that the Eunuch inflamed with such desire of religion, was as yet ignorant of those things, which comprehend all the maner of our saluation. God oftentimes permitteth this, not for that he is eyther vnmindfull of his promises, or enuyeth vs the knowledge of his worde: but for that by this delaying, he will kindle in vs a more feruent desire, exercise our faith, and teach vs, that the misteryes of his wisdom, be more high than can be attained to, by mans diligence and capacite. Therefore let this delaying offende no man: but let vs rather go on in feruent desire of the truth, and search out the healthfull misteryes of the diuine wisdom, and Christ will not fayle of his promise, which offereth himselfe to be founde of them that seeke him.

Also Philips easie entreatance is to be marked, who by and by openeth his mouth, that is to say, beginneth a diligent discourse of the place of the Prophete, wherein he beginneth to preach Jesus Christ vnto the Aethiop. And it is very lyke he also diligently expounded all the other thinges which are containned in the same Chapter touching Christ, & declared that they ought to be vnderstanded of Jesus Christ, the sonne of God and of Marie. Here are two thinges to be obserued. First, what ought to be preached: Jesus Christ, and he onely. Not for that his name shoulde be oftentimes foolishly repeated and iterated, but whatsoeuer thinges belong to our saluation, must be declared to be in him alone. For the father hath giuen him only, by whom true repentance and remission of sinnes cometh vnto vs, as Peter before hath taught vs. And in him onely is lyfe and saluation to be founde. Wherefore they are both foolish and false teachers, who soeuer teache these thinges without Christ, or shewe them to be in anye other beside him. The other thing that we be taught, is howe the doctrine and preaching of Christ maye be taken and learned out of the booke of the Prophetes. Yea, among all other thinges extant beside them, there, whereby it can be proued. Christ himselfe confesseth the same, where he sayth those thinges be conteyned in Moses and the Prophetes which he did and suffered for our saluation. Himselfe in the schoule at Nazareth, being about to teach the knowledge of true saluation, and of himselfe, taketh the place of Esaye, read in the lxj. chapter to expounde. Therefore wicked and execrable is the ingratitude of them which disdainfully contemne the booke of the olde Testament. Let vs rather acknowledge the grace of God, which would vnderset and beare by the knowledge of his sonne with so many and so euident testimonies, lette vs seeke the same with feruent desire, that after the example of the Eunuch, being therewith indued, we may reygne with Christ: to whome be prayse, honoꝝ, power and gloꝝy for ever. Amen.

Ignorant in many things.

Math. 7.

Philips facile and easie entreatance.

Actes. 5.

Actes. 4.

Luke. 24.

Luke. 4.

Rom. 4.

The. lxj. Homelie.

AND as they went on their way, they came vnto a certaine water, and the Chāberlain said, see, here is water, what doth let me to be baptised: Philip said

vnto

vnto him. If thou belecue with all thine heart, thou mayest. And hee answered and sayde: I belecue that Iesus Christ is the sonne of God. And hee commaunded the Chariot to stande still. And they went downe both into the water, both Philip and also the Chamberlaine, and hee baptised him. And as soone as they were come out of the water, the spirite of the Lorde caught away Philip, and the Chamberlaine sawe him no more. And he went on his waye reioycing. But Philip was founde at Azotus. And he walked through the Countrie preaching in all the Cities till he came to Caesarea.



Esterday your charitie heard the Sermon of Philip, wherewith he converted the Eunuch. This he tooke out of the writings of Esay. The argument thereof was Iesus Christ, whose mysteries no doubt he diligently expounded, declaring that he was the saviour of the worlde, that was promysed, in whome God the father (as Peter before thys taught vs) giueth vs both repentaunce & remission of our sinnes. Now followeth the effect of this Sermon, which herein appeareth that the Eunuch being endued with the knowledge of Christ

desireth to be baptised in his name, and to be receyued into the outward society of the Church by a visible signe and sacrament, which he would neuer haue done, vnlesse the spirite of God had marueylously wrought in his mynde, which he promised vnto his elect. Nowe let vs see the Eunuchs baptisme, the description whereof Luke diligently setteth forth, because every circumstance thereof serueth aswell for our consolation, as our instruction.

1. The Eunuch desireth to be baptized.

Rom. 4.

First commeth the Eunuch, who after he had heard Philip a good while intreating of Christes mysteries, and perceiued that his mind was drawne and illuminated with the power of the spirite, as soone as he sawe water, desired to be baptised: for this is the saying of an ardent desire: Beholde, here is water, what doth lette, but I may be baptised: Whereof may be gathered, that Philip among other things had intreated of baptisme also, according to the institution of Christ, whereby he will haue those that beleeue in him, to be consecrated vnto him, and taken into the body of his Church: whereby also he sealeth vnto vs his benefites, as sometime he vsed to doe in Circumcision, as Paule hath taught vs. Therefore where the Eunuch had receyued Christ with all his heart, he coulde restryne no longer, but would testifie his beliefe also, and be numbred in the Church of Christ, by this solemne ceremonie, he woulde be numbred and taken for one of Christes Church. And here we haue to consider the propertie of fayth, wherein two things are to be noted. First, that fayth cannot long lye hid, but after that it hath conceyued Christ in the minde, and hath instructed the whole manne with the knowledge of Christ, it will shewe also forth it selfe, and by outward profession of name, be seperated from others, desiring to be graffed in Christ, and to be consecrated to him. For it knoweth that God is a ielous God, which will not suffer anye other religion among his people. It knoweth that Iesus Christ chose him a peculiar people out of all the worlde,

whome

whome he will haue to giue himselfe onely to him. Therefore it frameth it selfe to his loze, and desireth nothing so much, as to be seene of all men, whereas it knoweth it hath to reioyce in none but Christ alone. These thinges reprove the sluggish mindes of the men of our daies, which are ashamed of Christ, and saye, that fayth maye be dissembled, if there be lyke to enshue any daunger by the confession thereof. Nowebeit there were manye thinges which myght haue feared the Aethiop from being baptized, for as much as he knewe that both Queene Candace, and all the people of his Countrie, were farre from the knowledge of Christ, which thing threatened him manifest perill, both of his estate and goodes. But his mynde incensed with the lively fayth of Christ, ouercommeth and bursteth through all impediments, in whose hart undoubtedly was written by the suggestion of the holy ghost, that saying of Christ: whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my wordes, in this adulterous & sinful generation, of him also shall the sonne of man be ashamed, when he shall come in the glory of his father with the holy Aungels. Moreover, this also is one other propertie of fayth, that although the Eunuch thinketh he hath obteyned in Christ all the treasures of Gods grace, and the infallible certaintie of saluation, yet for all that, he indgeth not the vse of baptisme to be vnprofitable or superfluous. For fayth knoweth, that Christ hath ordeyned nothing vnprofitably or in vayne, because it knoweth that he is the eternall wisdom of God the father, in whome are hidden all the treasures of knowledge. It knoweth also that the corruption of our fleshe hath neede of many thinges, and that it scarcely can be compelled with many prouocations, to take the way of saluation. Whereby it appeareth that they are boide aswell of the knowledge of Christ, as of themselves, that vse to despyse and reiect the sacramentes. For although by fayth in Christ, we attayne to whatsoeuer thinges are necessary to our saluation, yet because of the inclination of our flesh, it is profitable that Gods benefites shoulde be confirmed with outward seales, and that by them we shoulde be admonished of our dutie, whereof oftentimes we are forgetfull.

Marc. 8.

Col. 1.2.

¶ Philip requieth the confession of his fayth.

But Luke bringeth forth the other person of this act, that is to say, Philip, which by and by obeyed not the Eunuch, least he shoulde seeme to haue yielded vnto him, because of his dignitie or humilitie, but he requireth of him first the confession of a true fayth, saying: If thou beleuest with all thine heart, thou mayest. He hath therefore a respect to his fayth, and will haue it boide of all guyle and dissimulation. By which example we are taught that the sacraments ought not to be prophaned, that is to saye, to be giuen to the faythlesse. For where they be the badges and cognizances of the Church of Christ, it becometh not them to beare them that are straungers fro the church, because such for the more part are dogges and hogges, before whome, Christ forbiddeth vs to worke pearles. And if we consider the commaundement of Christ, it shall appeare, that the Apostles first ought to teach, and then they that beleued their doctrine, shoulde be baptized. For he sayth: Teach ye all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the sonne, and of the holy ghost. &c. Yet let no man thinke we support or maintayne the madnesse of the Anabaptistes. For they erre and keepe a pernicious coyle, whyle they drawe that to the infants of Christians, and rashly keepe them from baptisme, which is onely to be obserued in straungers from religion, and those that are of a full age. For we

Math. 7.

Math. 28.

affirme that such as be strangers from the church of christ, (as were sometime the Jewes and Gentyles, and as are at this daye, the Jewes and Turkes, and other suchlike) ought not to be baptised, vnlesse we wyl to grossely pollute baptisme, vntill they haue made profession of their fayth. But the reason of infantes borne of Christians, is of a farre other sort and case. For these are accounted among the children or household of the church, by reason of the lawe of covenant. They be holy, and Christ commaundeth them to be brought vnto him. It is also manifest, that they please God, because their Angells alwaies see the face of the father. And although our capacitie cannot conceyue their state and condicion: yet Christ testifieth they haue fayth. And that they haue the holy ghost, both the examples of Iohn the Baptist, and others do teach vs. Wherefore, to denye baptisme vnto them, is no small impietie, and a point of boldnesse more than monstrous. Howbeit, because we haue intreated hereof in other places, let thys little suffice for this present.

Further, let vs see the confession that the Eunuch made, which in manye plous breuitie, comprehendeth thinges of most importaunce: I beleue (sayth he) that Iesus Christ is the sonne of God. This confession is much like to that that Peter made in the name of all the Apostles. He attributeth vnto Christ, whatsoeuer is spoken of him in holy scripture. Yea, if the matter be narrowly marked, it comprehendeth all the articles of our fayth or Crede Apostolicall. For he acknowledgeth him to be God, no doubt, that God, which the Scriptures say was Creator of heauen and earth. He confesseth no such God, as the Jewes and Turkes doe, but such an one, as hath a sonne, borne of himselfe, coeternall and consubstantiall with him. He beleueth that this sonne was incarnated, as may be gathered of the thinges which he red in Esay. Further, he beleueth, that the sonne of God is Christ, that is to say, anointed, wherein he vnderstandeth his kingdome and Priesthode. Vnto the Priesthode belongeth all the passion of Christ, where he offered the sacrifice of his bodie and blood for the sinnes of the whole worlde. In the name of kingdome, is conserued his glorious resurrection, whereby he overcame death: also his ascension, whereby as by a most gorgeous triumph, he entered into heauen, and is sitting on the right hand of the father, which declareth him to be a most mightie king, to whome all power is giuen in heauen and in earth, and which shall come againe to giue iudgement and sentence vpon all fleshe. But he that confesseth Christ to be a king, must needs also confesse that he hath a Church, wherein he reigneth and gouerneth. This Church is the Communion or felowship of all Saintes, to whome Christ hath committed his inestimable treasures, to say, the forgiuenesse of sinnes, the resurrection of the fleshe, and felowship of eternall lyfe. These mysteries, I say, this short confession of the Eunuch comprehendeth. Whereby we are taught what an one, we also should acknowledge and confesse Christ to be. It is well to be considered howe confession of mouth is ioyned with fayth of minde. For we haue before this declared, howe these two must of necessitie be coupled together, and Paule expressly teacheth the same, where he sayth: This is the worde of fayth, which wee preach. For if thou acknowledge with thyn mouth, that Iesus is the Lorde, and beleue in thine hart, that God raysed him vp from death, thou shalt be safe. For to beleue with the heart, and not acknowledge with the mouth,

ij. The confession of the Eunuch.
Math. 6.
Iohn. 6.

Rom. 10.

maketh

maker. **Some** **where** Philip had gotten of the Eunuch that he chiefly desired, by and by without any tarisance, he went downe with him into the water, and there baptiseth him. Where we haue to consider, howe baptisme is ministered in common wafer, whether it were ryuer, or fountayne, as Ierome thinketh I knowe not. Neyther is there any mention made of newe halloving it, or of salt sprinkled, or of oyle, or of exorcisme, and many such like, as the superstition of Popes, in the ages following brought in. For Philip knewe the example of Iohn, which had baptised in the ryuer of Iordane. He knewe also, that by the ordinaunce of Christ, all water was consecrated to the vse of baptisme, and had no neede of newe purging, and coniuring. Alway therfore with the wicked and pœuish inuentions of most bolde merchants, which would haue religion to serue for priuate honour and gaine. Yet I would none by these examples shoulde take occasion euery where to baptise in fountaynes, or ryuers. For as we confesse it may be goddily done, if necessitie so require: so where Churches be appoynted, all things ought to be done decentlye, and according to lawfull order, least libertie bursting out into vnbrideled licence, disturbe both discipline and vnitie of Churches. It remaineth to tell of the ende of all this hystorie, which comprehendeth the departure of Philip, from the Eunuche, which Luke sheweth was after a myraculous sort. For when they came out of the water, the spirite of the Lorde caught Philip, and the Eunuch sawe him no more. God woulde by this myracle confirme the fayth of the Eunuch. For after this sort hee might vnderstande, that nothing was done in all this businesse by chaunce, but all things through the prouidence of God. Let vs see what they both did, after they were seperated.

Luke sayth, the Eunuch helde on his way, reioycing. Then he complayned not of Philips so sodaine departure, neyther carefully enquired after him, and much lesse detested him, as though he had bene some craftie Apocrite, or Jugler. Hereof must be gathered no argument of any inconstant, or vnkinde minde. But whereas he was now indued with fayth, and taught by the holy ghost, who according to Christs promise, brought all things to his minde, and by his testimonie confirmed the doctrine of fayth which Philip had taught him. Therefore he coulde easily settle and quiet hys minde. By which example we learne that we must not so sticke to the ministers, that when they are gone, we must dispayre in matters of fayth and religion. Let vs acknowledge them as Gods coadiutors, and stewardest of the mysteries of God, by whome he giueth vs fayth. Againe, let vs vnderstande, that the spirite of Christ, truly supplyeth the dutie of a Teacher, and that Christ will not fayle vs, although he sometime take them away, to whom we knowe we are much bounden. For Gods spirit can be bounde neyther to persons nor places, but bloweth where him lyketh.

Moreouer, the fruite of fayth which the Eunuch receyued, is declared, where Luke sayth: He helde on his waye greatly reioycing. So before he wrote that great ioye was made in Samaria, when Philip had preached the Gospel there. The ioy of a faythfull minde must hereby be vnderstanded, which vseth to spring of the peace and quiet of conscience. For after Christ is receyued by fayth, then man vnderstandeth that God the father is reconciled vnto him, whose wrath and horrible iudgement he was before afrayde

lik. The Eunuch is baptized.

2. mo. 8

1. Cor. 14.

The sodaine departure of Philip.

The Eunuch complayneth not of Philips absence.

1. Cor. 3. 4.

Iohn. 3.

The fruite of fayth is the ioy of the conscience.

and the
much is
tired

Rom.S.

The painfull
industrie of
Philip.

1. Cor. 15.

2. Cor. 11

Rom. 15

of the United States
to the United States
of the United States
of the United States
of the United States

of. And as that peace of God (as Paule beareth witness) passeth all vnder-
standing: so it chaſeth from the minde all the fumes of sadnesse, it clareth
the whole minde, and maketh vs to be without all feare, in the middle of all
afflictions. For this is the saying of all those that are faithfull: If God bee
with vs, who can be agaynst vs? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods
choſene? It is God that iustiſieth vs, who is it that can condemne? For they
knowe that the gates of hell, are not able to preuaile agaynst that liuely
rocke, on whome they are builded. Therefore because the Eunuch had ob-
tained this suretie of a quiet minde, he returneth home with greater ioye
than if he had gotten the great treasure of kings, or if he had returned to
Candace, with the triumph and victorie of the greatest enemies of Aethio-
pia. For what riches deserue to be compared with the treasures of the
kingdome of heauen? Or what victorie is there so great, as that which the
faithfull haue gotten by Iesus Christ agaynst the deuill, and hell? If princes
in these dayes were as desirous of this victorie, as they are of the king-
domes and baine glorie of this worlde: then would they also moze reioyce,
and the worlde also should be in better case.

But let vs returne to Philip, which was founde at Azotus, and from thence passing a long by the sea coast, preached the Gospell to all the Cities in these quarters, vnto Casarea, where it seemeth he tooke house to dwell in, because Paule hosted there, as we maye see in the. xxi. Chapter. You shall marke diligently the feruent and great desire that the men of the primitive Church had, to set forth the kingdome of Christ. For although Philip had traueyled greatly, in conuerting Samaria, and now might greatly haue glozied in conuerting the great man of Aethiopia, yet he thinketh not he had done his duetie, but enioyneth himselfe freshe labours, and refuseth not to vndertake new daungers for Christs sake. We see the lyke desire in Paule, who hauing laboured more than all the Apostles, yet holdeth on his course with great feruencie. These things reprocue the slouth of our dayes, where all sortes and states of men, as soone as they haue bozne a little bzunt, make holyday for any more they will doe: as though it were at our disposition and libertie, to start from the calling of God, and the dutie committed to vs. Furthermore these thinges teache vs, howe baine the enterprises of the wicked are agaynst the doctrine of Christ. For the more they rage, the more the truth shineth and ouercommeth. Yea, in the tyme of persecution, by their meanes and diligence it is most opened and set forth, who before seemed dastardes and cowardes. Hereof haue we an example in Philip, of whom there was no mencion made almost, while the Church was in quiet at Ierusalem, but that we hearde he was numbred among the Deacons. But now being become an outlaw, and banished man, he winneth Samaria vnto Christ, he sendeth the Eunuch whome he conuerted, into Aethiopia, to be an Apostle, and spreadeth the Gospell ouer all Iurie. Thus bleth God to frustrate the attempts of his enmies. Therefore no man ought to be offended at the manaces of Tyrannes, which now a dayes threaten destruction, to the Gospell and to our Churches. But let vs rather trust in God, who is both able to saue his elect in this worlde, and to make them coheyzes with Christ, in the worlde to come: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The ninth chapter vpon

the Actes of the Apostles.

The lxiiij. Homelie.

AND Saule yet breathing out threatnings and slaughter agaynst the Disciples of the Lorde, went vnto the highe Priest, and desired of hym letters to carye to Damascus to the Sinagoges: that if hee founde anye of this waye (whether they were men or women) he myght bring them bounde to Ierusalem. And when he iourneyed, it came to passe, that as he was nygh to Damascus, sodeinly there shyned round about him a lyght from heauen, and he fell to the earth, and hearde a voyce saying to him: Saule, Saule, why persecutest thou me? And he sayde what art thou Lorde? And the Lorde sayde, I am Iesus whome thou persecutest. It is harde for thee to kicke agaynst the pricke.



What saying of Christ is verve notable: No man commeth vnto me except my father drawe him. And it is not vnylike vnto that other, where he sayeth to his Disciples: You haue not chosen me, but I haue chosen you. For bothe o. them teach vs that saluation, and whatsoeuer belongeth therto, commeth to vs through the mere grace of God, and that nothinge is to be ascribed to our workes or merites. Hereof there are many examples, among which this one is notable, which of late we sawe in the

Aethiop, vnto whome Philip a Preacher of true saluation, by the mere benefite of God was sent, when he thought not of it, much lesse seeking after it. Yet because it is reported that he was endued with certaine singuler gifts, least any man myght thinke that he attayned to saluation, through the merite of them, the hystorie of Saule conuerted vnto Christ, is of purpose sette after his conuersion, whome Iesus Christ doth not only prouoke and drave agaynst his will vnto saluation, but (as it is sayd in the Parable of certaine guesstes, Luke. 14.) compelleth him to come in. And surely Luke so reporteth all this hystorie, & euery man may see, nothing is here attributed to the merit of man, but that saluation commeth vnto Saule by the benefite of Gods onely grace. Yea, Paule himselfe plainly teacheth, that this ensample is to be referred chiesely to this ende, where he sayth that he was therefore called and cutte of, euen in the middle of hys tyrannicall enterprises agaynst the Church,

Iohn. 6.

Iohn. 15.

1. Tim. 1.

1. Cor. 15.

1. The des-
cription of
Saul being a
persecutor.Saul hath
power given
him from the
high priests.

Church, that Iesus Christ might shewe on him first all clemencie and mercye, for an ensample vnto them that shoulde beleue in him. And in another place he confesseth he is unworthy the name of an Apostle, if we respect his merite or desert, but that hee is by the grace of God whatsoever he is. Nowbeit, whereas there be in this hystorie, many things most worthy to be knowne and considered, it shall be profitable for vs to examine all the poyntes and circumstances thereof. And at this present Luke first propoundeth the description of Saule, and then he beginneth the hystorie of hys conuersion.

Luke is very diligent in describing of Saule, because by his description, both Gods power & goodnesse is the more evidently knowne. First he declareth his disposition and nature, where he sayth: he breatheth out threatnings and slaughter. His mynde therefore was inflamed and incensed agaynst the Church, a signe and note whereof he had given before at the stoning of Steuen, and when he did make haucke of the Church at Ierusalem, as hath bene declared heretofore. Yet now he seing he preuaileth nothing, but that the Church spreadeth every day further and further, he conceyeth such a furie and rage in his mynde, that he can doe nothing now, but breath out and dreame of cruell threats, bloody slaughters, and destructions. For as we sayde before, such is the nature of tyrantes, and the enemies of the Church, that after they haue once tasted the bloude of the godly, the more they rage, and lyke beastes haue cast from them all sense of humanitie, and are not able to put away that rage of mynde that they haue conceyued, vnlesse they be tamed by the mightie hande of God. Examples of this crueltie is euerywhere so be seene in hystories. The consideration of them serueth vs for this purpose, to make vs vnderstande what to hope for of the tyrants of these dayes, whome we see now so bled vnto bloude, that they thirst after it more cruelly than any Tygres. Whom surely vnlesse the Lord tame, no mannes force or reason can mollifie or appease.

But because rage of mynde must be fenced with armour, Saule propoundeth him of that also. For it is sayde, he went vnto the high Priest, of whome he receyued letters to the Synagoges of Damascus, whereby full power was given him to bynde as many as he coulde fynde to be Christians. Wherby we gather that matters of religion the same tyme were committed by the Romaine Presidents to the high Priests. For they being blinded in Gentyle superstition, as it is credible, that they were sone wearied with the dayly controuersies about religion: so they sought all meanes whereby to ridde themselves of such incombances, and to lay the enuie and hatred of the people vpon others neckes. Thys occasion fell out as the Bishops woulde wyse it, whose aduantage and honoz came in perill, by preaching of the Gospel. Saule therefore garded by their authoritie, and taking to him complices, and ministers of his mischiefe, goeth to Damascus, for that he vnderstode the kingdome of Christ beganne to spring and flourish marueylously in that place. This thing teacheth vs that Bishops will alwayes be the grieuouslest enemies of true religion, and Christian doctrine, who by their studie and diligence, ought most to set it forward: For as soon as they begynne, to conuert religion into lucre, they can then abide the lycht of the truth no longer, which reproueth their naughtynesse. That these Bishoppes were such, is more euident by the hystorie of the Gospel, than needeth any long demonstration. What we may therefore hope for of the

the Prelates of our dayes, he shall easily perceiue that well marketh their couetousnesse and ambition. In the meane season we haue to consider the prophane cowardynesse and slouth of Princes and Magistrates, who because they passe little of religion, will get them no enuie or hatred for religion sake. And yet least they shoulde seeme Godlesse and boyde of religion, they commit such matters, to Popes, Bishops, and Cardinals, getting themselves by this pretence, a great estimation of godlynesse, and seeking an excuse agaynst them that might saye they were persecutors of the truth. For they say such controuersies belong not vnto them, and perswade themselves, that they cannot doe more godlye, than to commit all such matters vnto the heades of the Church. In which iudgement they are marueylously confirmed, by the counterfayte Bishops. For by this meanes, they challenge to themselves all power to iudge of religion, whose ambition and couetousnesse woulde fall to the ground, if the doctrine of truth were not extinguished. But God which will not let this trayne and craft go vnreruenged, shall full sore punish them, and the Bishops of the Jewes together. And this pretence shall not excuse Princes, forasmuch as the charge of the Church, and hearing of matters in religion pertayneth vnto them. For to this ende and purpose was the booke of the lawe deliuered to the king. And the Prophete teacheth vs that Kinges ought to be Purples of the Church. And we want not most notable examples of Kinges, which because of their setting forth of the truth, and maintayning of the Church, haue purchased to themselves singuler commendation.

But let vs also consider what Saules ende and purpose was. It was this, that whosoever he shoulde finde men or women, of Chyikes profession, he shoulde bring them bounde to Ierusalem. There was therefore no difference of Iere with him. And surely he that was become so cruell, spared no age neyther. For he was nowe purposed to make all the Christians awaye, and so utterly to extinguishe the name of Christ. The cause of this cruell attempt, he declarerth otherwheres to be the zeale of his olde religion, which he thought by all meanes was to be retayned and defended. For it is manifest, he was a Pharisey, and himselfe confesseth many times, that he persecuted the name of Christ and his Church, enen for the loue that he bare to the lawe. Let vs here first observe, howe much God suffereth the wicked to doe. For Luke sheweth that these thinges were attempted agaynst the Disciples, and Christian women. But so the Lorde had foreshewed, that it shoulde be iudged a Gods seruice, to kill any that beleued in him. And the Apostles warne vs herof many times, to thintent that we be not offended at the stormes of persecution, and at the Crosse. For why shoulde we in these dayes with the gospellers in a better state or condicion, than was in the time of Christ, bys Apostles and the primitive Church? Moreover, Saules example teacheth vs howe little a preposterous zeale in religion, which men sometymes conceiue of humane traditions, without the prescript of Gods worde, auayleth to attaynement of saluation. For the more feruent Saule is herein, the farther he recedeth from Christ, which is the only way of saluation. The more he strueth for the righteousnesse of the lawe, the farther he is from the righteousnesse of Christ, which alone defendeth vs from the iudgement of God. And that that cometh to passe in Saule, the same he testifieth came to passe in the Jewes. For he sayth they

burne

Deut. 17.

Esay. 49.

Saules ende
and purpose.

Actes. 26.

Philp. 3.

Galat. 1.

Iohn. 16.

Rom. 10.

burne in zeale towards God, but not according to knowledg. Where they fell into this inconuenience, that whyle they woulde establishe their owne righteousnesse, they lost the righteousnesse that is in God. The same maye be affirmed of the Monkes, but that the most part of them are more giuen to their belly and to ydlenesse, than to religion. Yet maye this most truly be sayde of Tyrants, that the more constantly they labour to keepe the religion of their forefathers, the more feruently they persecute the Gospell. Here is that hurtfull error of theirs confuted, which thinke those thinges that are done agaynst God and his true religion, may be excused by zeale of godlynesse. As though God had giuen vs the rules of his worde in bayne, and that they ought not chiefly to be obserued, as we haue elsewhere declared. Furthermore, here is to be considered both the goodnesse and power of god, who coulde not only make so cruell a Wolfe sodeinly tame, but also a most faythfull Shephearde of his stocke. Let no man therefore rashly dispayze of any mannes saluation, or of the Church, seeing God can both sodainly chaunge the myndes of men, and make them defenders of his Church, who euen now it seemed woulde haue destroyed the same.

2. The historie
of Saules
conuerſion.
The time, &
the place.

Let vs come to the hystorie of Saules conuerſion, which Luke setteth forth in liuely colors. And beginning with the time and place: And when he iourneyed (sayth he) it came to passe, as hee was nygh to Damascus. Therefore when Saule was in most hope of good successe, and bringing his matters to passe; then both Christ withſtande his attemptes. Nowe he beholdeth Damascus before his face, & perhaps as a wolfe hauing espied his pray, casteth in his mynde terrible cogitations; howe he myght sooneſt rauishe Chriſtes ſhepe. Marke here the counſaile and blage of God, which manye times ſuffreth his enemies to raunge ſo farre, that they ſeeme ſcarce a naile bredth from the marke of their purpoſe. Which thing is the cauſe that the Chriſtians, whoſe deſtruction the tyrants conſpyre, ſometime conceyue great and horrible terrozs of mynde. And ſuch terrozs it is lyke they of Damascus were in, when they heard that Saule came, and was almoſt in their necks. But thus bleth God to doe, both for that he will the more gloziouſly ſhewe his power agaynst the wicked, and teach the godly not to be afraid nor feare, when they ſee themſelues beſet rounde about with their enemies. So he ſuffered Pharao to go ſo farre, that the Iſraelites beganne to deſpyle, not howe to eſcape, but howe to be buried. But when with open mouth like a Wolfe, he woulde haue ſwallowed by Iſrael, God ſodeinly deſtroyed him. Many thinges of lyke ſort myght be rehearſed, if time woulde ſerue. But thys ought to be the ble of them all, that we preſcribe God no time, who wil let no oportunitie by any meanes eſcape, whereby to bring his doinges to effect. But let vs obſerue that ſaying of the Prophete: Tarie thou the Lords leysure, be ſtrong, and he ſhall comfort thine heart.

Pſal. 27.

The maner
of his con-
uerſion.

Furthermore, the euangelist declareth the maner of his conuerſion, ſaying: Sodeinly there ſhone a light rounde about him from heauen, and he fell to the ground, and heard a voyce ſaying vnto him, Saule Saule, why perſeuteſt thou me? This is a terrible ſight to mannes ſenſes; yet ſuch as ſufficiently teacheth vs, that theſe thinges were eaſily done of the Lorde. For he ſendeth a light from heauen, as it had bene a lightning, which was as eaſie a thing for him to doe, as to ſende out and call backe the ſonne againe. He woulde haue this light ſodainly to appeare, to the ende the cruell Wolfe, might

might be the more feared, which in his greedie famine, had after a sort, already deuoured the church of Christ. Vnto these flashings of light, was added a voyce, in steede of a thunder, and sodeinly smiteth him to the ground, when he least feared any such thing. These thinges teach vs how easie a matter it is for God to beate downe the enterpryses of his enemyes. For where he is the Lorde of hostes, he can arme all things agaynst them, and there is none so dyspyled a creature, but is able to punishe those, whom God will haue punished. So he once sent water sodeynly, and destroyed all the woorld. Upon Sodome he rayned fire and brimstone from heauen. The haughtie and stowte stomaked Aegyptians, he brought downe, one while by darknesse, one other while by swarmes of flies, sometime by the hopping of filthie frogges, sometime by twinging and byting of Lice. Antiochus and Herod he killed with wormes and bermine that bred of their owne fleshe. He killed Saul the Tyranne wyth his owne sworde. I let passe an infinite number of like sort, bicause this fall of Saul, may serue in steade of many examples. It shall profite vs well to beholde him. What doe the letters procured from the high Bishop profite him being nowe sodeinly fallen? What anayleth the power graunted by his authoritie, agaynst the Christians? Can he be helde bp by the ministerie of that garde of his, that he brought with him? No, with what engines and weapons lyeth he ouerthrowne that euen now seemed an other Enceladus? Then was no clap of thunder as yet heard, no ratling of clowdes among themselues, no renting or reauing with fall of thunderbolte. Onely a light from heauen flashing in hys face, and the voyce of Christ sounding in his eares, so stryketh him both in bodie and soule, that he lyeth wide open and yeldeth to Christ his Conquerour, whome a little before he ment to put cleane away out of all mens remembraunce. As these thinges serue for our consolation, agaynst the wicked enemyes of Christ: so they must be applyed to our instruction. For they teach vs how vnprosperously the pride of them succedeth, which seeing euery day the examples of Gods power & Maiestie, dare yet stowte, and ware fierce, agaynst God and his worde: which I iudge to be one of the chiefe arguments of our corruption, when we puffed bp in assaunce of well fauourednesse, kindred, dignities, or ryches, forget God, who can so easily pull downe our proude stomackes. Let vs rather acknowledge Gods power, and humble our selues willingly vnder his valiaunt hande, least we proue to our vtter losse and hinderaunce, how much he is able to doe.

Nowe let vs beholde Saule, thus lying prostrate along, who hearing a voyce from heauen, asketh: Who art thou Lorde? He hearde he was cast downe by him whome he persecuted, and yet he asketh who he is. Yet is this saying a token of an humbled, and asswaged minde. Which would God we might see in these dayes, in those whome God bseth to cast downe, either by sicknesse, by pouertie, or other affliction, or calamitie, and yet acknowledge not the Lorde, nor that God hath cast them downe.

But bicause Saule sheweth himselfe nowe to be somewhat meeker, the Lorde doth bouchsafe to make him aunswere, saying: I am Iesus whome thou persecutest. It is harde for thee, to kicke agaynst the pricke. Which aunswere standeth in two poyntes. In the first, he teacheth who he is, and also reprooueth him of his heynous offence, as though he shoulde saye: Thou thinkest thou goest about to persecute men, and such, who as they are hated

The effect.

They are Christs enemies, that persecute the Church.

zach. 2.

Psal. 2.

2. Tim. 2.

The punish-
ment of per-
secutors of
the Church.

zach. 12.

of all men, so haue they no reuenger or defender amongst men. But they are not without a reuenger, neyther doest thou persecute them alone. For I am that Iesus whome they professe, I reigne in heauen, and diligently obserue their condition and case. I long since promised to be their patrone and defender: yea, such familiaritie is betwene me and them, that I thinke it done to my selfe, whatsoeuer thou doest to the least of them. &c. Hereof may be gathered a generall doctrine: that whatsoeuer is done to them that worship Christ, the same is done to Christ. For it is his saying that is reade in the Prophetes: He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye. And Esay in the lxiij. chapter, speaking of the beneuolence of God towarde hys people, amongst other things sayth: In all their afflictions, I am afflicted. Let this serue for the instruction of Tyrannes, that they forget not howe they haue Christ their enimie, while they persecute the Church, who shall one day bruyse them with a rodde of yron, and breake them in peeces, lyke a Pot- ters vessell. Againe, let the Godly take comfort hereof, that in tribulation they haue Christ a companion, with whome if they suffer, they shall one daye reigne.

In the other part of his aunswere, he layeth a punishment before their eyes, saying: It is hard for thee to spurne agaynst the pricke. He bleth a Me- taphore or translation taken from Oren or Horse, which if they winse a- gaynst the Goade, they do not only not preuaile in so doyng, but also pricke themselves the deeper into the fleshe, and are occasion of their further hurt. The Worde threatneth the same shall come to passe in Saule, and in all other, which after his example persecute the Church, that is to saye, that their at- temptes shall not onely be in vaine, but dangerous and hurtfull also for the beginners. For the Church of Christ is the heauie stone, in lifting by whereof, no man shall trie maystryes without some hurt, as God pro- miseth by his Prophete. And there want not examples whereby to proue the same. For hereto belongeth the storie of Pharao, which spurning agaynst the pricke, hath renoumed the waues of the redde sea, with his, and hys peoples destruction. The same iudgement tryed Sanheribe, who warring with God, and the people of Israell, by the hande of one Aungell, lost hys whole armie, bagges and baggage. Of Antiochus, and Herode, we spake ere while. To whome may be ioyned the Emperours of Rome, as manye as after Christes tyme persecuted the Churche, and within short space bought their crueltie full deare. To these if we ioyne the examples of Gods iudgements, in our dayes, agaynst the enimies of the Church, we shall say, that the truth of this sentence which Christ here pronounceth is in- fallible. To vs this must be the vse of all these things, that we feare not the power of the worlde, and persecution of Tyrannes, nor be not therewith discouraged. For that verie Christ lyueth still, and will not forsake hys Church, which he hath promised to be with, vnto the ende of the worlde: to him be blessing, honour, power, and glorie, for euer. Amen.

The. lxiij. Homelie.

AND he both trembling and astonyed sayd: Lorde, what wilt thou haue me to doe? And the Lorde sayde vnto him: Arise, and go into the Citie, and it shall be tolde thee what thou must doe. The men which iourneyed wyth him

him stode amazed, hearing a voyce, but seeing no man. And Saule arose from the earth, and when he opened his eyes, he sawe no man. But they led him by the hande, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three dayes without sight, and did neyther eate nor drinke.



As Saule before hee was converted vnto Iesus Christ, with great crueltie persecuted the name and Church of Christ: so God chose him, to set forth in him a peculiar ensample of his grace and goodnesse, teaching vs hereby that we haue nothing that we may gloie in before God, but that both our saluation, and whatsoeuer things else, helpe vs to the attayning thereof, ought to be referred to Gods mere goodnesse & grace. For although all men beare not like hatred agaynst Christes Church as Paule did, and that God compelleth not all men by open force, to take the way of saluation: yet are all men in one state and condition, so that they must be drabone and conuerted by the mightie power of God. For if we consider man, as he is ruled and led by naturall lore and reade, we shall well perceyue he vnderstandeth not the thinges belonging to the spirite of God. Wherefore where the vnderstanding is corrupt, the will must nedes be euill and corrupted, which bringeth forth the impure and wicked desires of the flethe: so that God truly sayd in the beginning. The inuentions of mans heart, are euill euen from his childehoode. But where by reason of sinne, all our power is so weakened, that of our selues we be not able to thinke well: It well appeareth, that no man either would or could earnestly think of his saluation, except he were illuminated, drabone, & molified by God, although some mens corruption is more manifest and notorious than others. But bicause in Saules conuersion, there are many other things, which serue for our information, Luke standeth diligently vpon the discription thereof. And at this time, bicause he hath declared the first act or dving, he rehearseth the effect of this harde encounter, and diuers other things incident to the same.

He comprehendeth in few words a marueplous effect of gods punishmēt in Paule. For (sayth he) trembling and astonyed, he sayde: Lorde, what wilt thou haue me to doe? And the Lorde sayde vnto him, aryse, and go into the Citie. &c. We haue in this place diligently to consider, both Gods person, and Paules. And first in Paule, we may see a token of a minde greatly humbled, and readie to all kinde of obsequie and seruiceablenesse. For now he doth bouchsafe to call him Lorde, whome before, he hated worse than a dogge, or Code. And of his owne accorde, enquireth what his will and pleasure is, folowing those seruants, which of a dutifull, and diligent readinesse to please, be to preuent their maysters commaundement, before they heare it. Hereout we may gather two thinges belonging to our instruction. First, whosoever feele Gods hande chastyning them, are admonished of their dutie. Let them acknowledge that God like a father punisheth and beateth them, to the entent to amende them, and correcteth those that be his, least they should be condemned with the world, that will not repent. Which is the cause that the Prophete pronounceth him happie or blessed whome the Lorde chasteneth. Againe, let them acknowledge him to be

thei.

their

1. Cor. 2.

Gene. 8.

1. The effect
of Gods cha-
stening.

The dutie of
them whome
God chasteneth.

1. Cor. 11.
Psal. 94.

Iohn. 18.

Chastisement
hath place in
matters of
religion.

Luke. 14.

Deut. 13.

Christ turneth
not from
him that ha-
bleth himself.
Math. 11.
Iohn. 6.

their Lorde, and earnestly ensearch after his will, that they may knowe howe to get his fauour and good will. This is the proprietie of Gods elect, who thinke nothing more grieuous and intollerable, than to perceyue God to be offended with them. But the reprobate be of a farre other opinion, who although sometime they be compelled to obey and yelde vnto God, yet they frette and fume, and by many arguments, declare they doe it agaynst their willes. Wherefore they by and by retorne againe to their nature, and to their olde wont, scarcely intermitted. The Scripture sheweth examples hereof in Pharao, and Saule the King. With whome may be numbred the Bishops seruants that were sent to apprehende Christ, who though they were smitten to the grounde, by the power of his worde, yet they by and by rose againe, and layde wicked handes on him, whome they ought to haue acknowledged for their Lorde. Let vs therefore doe as Paule did, as oft as we be calt downe by sicknesse, oppressed with pouertie, or become prayes to our enemies, or be any other wayes troubled or molested, and let vs say with the heart: Lorde what wilt thou haue vs to doe? And so shall those thinges turne to our health, which seemed to vs to be very hurtfull.

Secondly, this example teacheth vs howe necessary a seuerer kinde of correction, is sometime in matters of fayth and religion. For we see many of such a proprietie and condition, that vnlesse they be constrained by force, they will not yelde vnto the worde of God. Wherefore Christ, commaunded that some shoulde be compelled to come to the heavenly marriage. Of which number it is more euident that Paule is one, than needeth great declaration. Therefore it is no small error they holde, which crye out that no man ought to be compelled in matters of fayth and religion, because God onely hath power and authoritie ouer the mynde of man. For to graunt that it belongeth to God alone, to inspire, to drawe, and to giue fayth, yet we knowe agayne that God commaundeth false teachers to be conuincd both by argumentes and Scriptures, and also to be bridled by the sword of the Magistrate, if they ware obstinate and incurable. By the same reason superstition, false worship, and blasphemie is commaunded to be made awaye. For it were an absurde thing to punish them which lye in wayte for our bodies and goodes, and let them scape free, which wickedlye deface the glory of God, and lay snares of damnation for mennes soules. There are examples euerywhere of them, which being restrayned through seuerer chastisement, haue ceased after that from their blasphemie, and haue bene brought to knowledge of the truth. But as in all other thinges, so herein chiefly we wishe all wise dome and moderation to be bled.

But let vs heare Christ, who by and by sheweth himselfe courteous and friendly to him, whome he seeth so ready to doe his commaundement. For as the father in the Prophets crieth: Retorne vnto me, and I will retorne vnto you: so we reade in the Gospell, that hee calleth all vnto him that are heauye laden, and openly testifieth, that he will refuse none that cometh vnto him. He commaundeth him to go into the Citie, that he maye there learne of Ananias, what he hath to doe. Two causes maye be rendred of this commaundement. For God by this meanes trieth Pauls modestie, whyle he sendeth him to them, whome not long before he ment violently to laye hold on. And also procureth hereby an authoritie and dignitie to the ministerie of his worde. For where he knoweth that men oftentimes contemne it, he teacheth

teacheth us therefore that the vse thereof is necessarie to the attayning of saluation. This we see in the hystorie of the Aethiop; whose heart where he might haue illuminated by the secret working of his spirit, yet woulde he vse the ministerie of Philip to do the same. And now although he bough safe to talke with Saule, yet he sendeth him to Ananias, to learne the mysteries of fayth and saluation, and by his ministerie to be baptised and taken in to the fellowship of the Church. Wherevnto that also is lyke, that hereafter we shall heare tolde of Cornelius the Centurion, whome God admonisheth by an Angell sent vnto him, to sende for Peter, and to be taught of him. These things teache vs, that we must not thinke the ministerie of the worde vnprofitable and superfluous, and that we must looke for no Angelicall or heauenly reuelations to instruct and teache vs. For where the Lorde will haue vs to be taught by the Scriptures, and preaching of the worde, who soeuer contemneth the same, declareth plainly that he is vnworthy of his kingdome, and shall neuer come to the knowledge of the fayth. For why shoulde God boughsafe to teache a despiser of his order after a newe sort? Therefore this saying of Paule standeth sure: how shall they beleue if they haue not hearde? howe shall they heare, without a Preacher? Agayne, that saying of Christ: They haue Moses and the Prophets, whome if they will not heare, neyther will they heare those that ryse from the deade, to declare their saluation. We are admonished also, that none be he neuer so simple a Minister of Christ and his worde, ought to be despised so he be lawfully ordeyned, seeing that singular vessell of God, Paule, is sent to Ananias, of whome till this tyme, no mention hath bene made. For the authoritie of Gods word dependeth not vppon the dignitie of man, but standeth in his full strength and force, whatsoeuer he be whome God sendeth to vs, to teach and preach his will.

Furthermore, Luke enterlaceth among these premisses a short treatise of Pauls companions, whome he sayth to stande amazed, and to haue hearde a voyce; but to haue seene no man. But if we hearken to Paule declaring these things before Agrippa, it shall appeare that they also in the beginning fell doونه, and albeit they first rose agayne, yet they stode as menne amazed in their minde, by reason of the great feare they were put in. Luke seemeth somewhat to vary from Pauls narration, whereas he saith they neyther hearde the voyce, nor sawe any man. But here is no contradiction in these things. For here they are sayde to heare a voyce, because they hearde a sounde and noyse. And it is sayde, they hearde it not, because they vnderstode not what was sayde, and God would not haue them vnderstande the things that belonged not to them. Or else that that is spoken here of the voyce, must be referred to Pauls voyce only, which his companions heard, where they heard not the voyce of Christ talking with Paule, as which pertayned not to them. And thus seemeth Pauls wordes to meane, which are thus written in the xij. Chapter following: And they that were with me, saw verily a light, and were afrayde, but they hearde not the voyce of him that spake with mee. In this place is chiefly to be considered what semayneth for all them which ioynе with the open enemies of Christ, and are partakers of their deuyles. For they are punished with them, whether they be seruants, subjects or children. For all priuiledges of men must giue place to that obedience, wherevnto God hath bounde vs to him: and the authoritie of his saying

Rom. 10.

Luke 16.

2. Paule and his companions, who were with him when he was in the prison, and they were amazed, and they heard a voice, but they saw no man.

The companions of the wicked are punished with the wicked.

Rom. i.

3. Pauls state
and conditionGod turneth
the enterprises
of the wicked
vpon the
deuysers.
Galat. i.

Psal. i.

saying shall remaine firme and sure for euer : we must obey God rather than men. Therefore as many as for fauour of men forget the dutie they owe vnto God, deserue to perishe with them whome they haue loued more than God. These things teach vs to auoyde the company of the wicked, and if we cannot so doe, at leastwise to take harte that we allowe not their wicked enterprises with our consent, nor defende them woth our authoritie. The fable of the Storke taken among the Cranes, is well knobone in the writings of the Heathen, which the Husbandman kyled, pleading his innocencie all in bayne, bicause she was taken among the Cranes that cropped and eate downe his corne. And Paule in another place pronounceth them woorthy of punishment, that not onely doe euill, but which also consent to euill. Which thinges if we in these dayes woulde consider, we shoulde lesse marueyle at the manifolde miseries of our tyme, for all men are faultie in contemning and oppressing the Gospell, whereas one sorte cruellie persecute it, another sort busily seeke the friendship and league of the persecutors, and others stande ydly looking on, and suffer those to be punished and oppressed, whome they ought to maintaine and defende.

But let vs returne to Paule, whose state Luke now describeth. And first he sayth he rose vp, whereas Christ the Lorde had giuen him power so to doe. He addeth that when he had opened his eyes, he sawe nothing, being blynded with the brightnesse of the light that came from heauen. Wherefore he cometh to Damascus, ledde by his companions, where he remained whole thre dayes, and neyther eate nor dranke all the whyle. All these are no small tokens of a great feare he was stricken in, both in body and mynde. That that some tell here of Pauls being taken into Paradyse, we leaue as vncertayne, bicause we will not seme ouer boldly to affirme any thing.

In the meane season it shall suffyse that we marke howe God bleseth to defeate the deuises of his enemies, and turneth vpon their owne heads the things they procure agaynst his faythfull seruants. Paule vnto diuers other seemed till thys tyme, to see more than other, as who had profited more than many of his fellowes, as himselfe testifieth otherwheres. But now he is blynde both in body and minde, vntill he be illuminated of God. He cometh accompanied with his trayne of companions and seruants, whome he had picked out to the ende to bring the Christians bounde to Ierusalem. But himselfe is ledde by them more than captiue and bounde. All so it is very like he woulde haue brought many to famine and pouertie, but now he suffreth famine thre dayes together, and knoweth not what to doe. There are lyke ensamples euerywhere in the Scriptures. So we see Balaam and Balaac deluded, whyle they heape blessings vpon the Israelites, whome they mynded with curses to ouerwhelme. So the Egyptians thrust them out of their countie laden with their owne treasures, whome they ment to oppress with perpetuall bondage. So Saule ministred vnto Dauid euery day matter of greater glozie, whyle he seeketh his destruction. Here vnto is the storie of Haman and Mandocheus to be referred, with infinite others, which confirme the saying of Dauid, where he declareth that God from heauen laugheth at his enemies deuises. Let vs therefore learne to acknowledge the power of our Saviour Iesus Christ, and let vs not feare the threatnings and enterprises of any of his enemies. Let vs submit our selues to him by

faith.

faithfull obedience, that we may hereafter be heires with him in heauen, of the glorie that he hath promised vs: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glory for ever. Amen.

The. lxx. Homely.

AND there was a certaine Disciple at Damasco named Ananias, and the Lorde sayde to him in a vision, Ananias? And hee sayde, behold I am here Lord. And the Lord sayd vnto him, arise, and go into the streete which is called straight, and seeke in the house of Iudas after one called Saule of Tharsus: for behold he prayeth, and hath seene in a vision a man named Ananias coming vnto him, and putting his handes on him, that he might receyue his sight. Then Ananias answered: Lorde, I haue hearde by many of this man howe much euill he hath done to thy Saints at Ierusalem: and here he hath authoritie of the high Priestes to bynde all that call on thy name. The Lorde sayde vnto him: Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessell vnto me, to carie my name before the Gentyles, and Kings, and the children of Israel. For I will shewe him howe great things he must suffer for my names sake.



Although we ought diligently to consider the conuersions and callinges of all the Apostles, yet Pauls conuersion of all others deserueth singularly to be marked: partly bicause it contayneth in it a rare example of Gods mercye towarde sinners, and partly for that Paule laboured more than all the Apostles, neyther is there anye other whose writings are more often alledged, eyther of the olde writers or newe, in matters of fayth and religion.

It is therfore necessary that we knowe who he was, howe God called him and conuerted him, that we may haue his doctrine in the more authoritie, which thing is the cause that Luke writeth his hystorie so diligently. And hitherto he hath declared, howe the Lorde interrupted his fiercenesse, and horrible attempts, in the middle of hys rate and businesse, and that so forcibly, that he was fayne to offer himselfe to the Lord, to be obedient and to be taught, being a whyle before, his grievous enimie. Here vnto he conveniently addeth howe he is appoynted to the office of an Apostle, which contayneth a notable discourse betwene the Lorde Jesus Christ and Ananias, by whose ministerie Paule was to be ordered. Euery part whereof we will declare as farre forth as God shall permit.

First the Lorde calleth Ananias, that Paule may take orders by his ministerie. And of Ananias Luke speaketh but little in this place, but Paule at large, where he commendeth him of his godlinesse, and sayth he deserued among the Jewes, the testimonie of a good, and an innocent man. Him the Lorde certifieth of his will, by a vision, and likewise prepareth Paule being in his prayers, by an other vision, worthily to receyue Ananias. Here our Saviour Christ is well to be marked, which instructeth them both by euident visions. For hereby is perceyued the ardent desire that Christ hath to the saluation of mankind, shewed and declared ingenerall towardes all men, and especially in seeking the lost sheepe, as himselfe elsewhere testifieth.

Ananias is
called to giue
Paule hys
orders.
Actes. 22.

Luke. 15.

Rom. 10.

Luke. 8.

Ezech. 33.

Paule prayeth

fyeth. Which thing as it is for our comfort, so it also serueth for our instruction, that we should traueyle rather to saue sinners, than to destroy them, and not follow those, which glorying in their feruent zeale of Gods glorie, rashly reiect and condemne all those, whome they see once to haue swarued from the way of truth. Moreouer we are taught, how expedient it is, that all things be done rightly & duely in the outwarde ministerie of the worde. For except the ministers be duely called, and well assured of their calling, and the hearers well prepared to receyue their sayings, there can followe no worthie fruite and auayle of their doing. For howe shall they preach, except they be sent? Or with what argumentes shall they be emboldened agaynst the threates and enterpyses of the wicked, which craftily haue usurped and intruded vpon the office of teaching? Again, if the hearers come not well minded, and prepared to heare the worde of the Lorde, then shall they receyue that wholesome sēde, eyther into the way, eyther into stonie places, or among thornes, and there shall be many impediments that shall cause that they shall bring forth no worthie frutes. Wherefore Christ requirerh honest mindes, which will holde fast the sēde they haue once receyued, and being armed agaynst all suggestions of Satan, the worlde and the flesh, bring forth worthie frutes with patience. And that we haue nēde of diligent preparation hereto, euery man may easily vnderstande, that well considereth the corrupt nature of man. These things if we will well weigh and expend, it shall easily appeare, why there is so much preaching in these dayes, with so little profite. For most part of the Ministers, without waityng for the lawfull calling of the Lorde, get into the ministerie by vnlawfull meanes, for the belly sake: and they that will not sēme the vngodlyest of the hearers of the worde, come vnto it, more for custome sake, than of any earnest desire of amendment, being altogether like vnto those, which in the Prophete, sayde: Come I praye you, let vs heare what worde is gone forth from the Lorde.

Furthermore, we haue also to consider Paule, whom the Lord speaking to Ananias, witnesseth to be in his prayer. This is to be vnderstanded of the continuall prayers he made, all the thre dayes long, as easily appeareth by the circumstaunces, because there were many thinges, which might moue Paule vnto prayer. For he felt the horrible hande of God, which threw him downe. He hearde howe he was accused from heauen, to be the professed enemie of the sonne of God. Then came to his minde the wicked enterpyses, & crueltie that he had vsed against the name of Christ and his Church, also the banishments, chaynes, imprisonment, and torments, with the lamentation and crying of women and childzen, whereof he had bene the author. Yea, his guiltie conscience, as yet troubled him. Then againe the waityng for the promise of reuelation and instruction, was able to styre him vp to earnest prayer, and yet in this earnestnesse and diligence of praying, God disappoynteth him (as I might say) whole thre dayes together. These things commend vnto vs an incessant earnestnesse of prayer, because there are as many and as bygent causes, to styre vs vp also thereto. For if we discende into our selues, we shall finde they are no tryfling synnes, whereby we haue deserued Gods wrath. We many tymes feele the hande of Gods anger. The conscience of our wickednesse oftentimes molesteth vs. We are still in daunger of all kindes of aduersitie. And if the thinking

here of

hereof be not able to kindle in vs heartie and ardent prayer, then shall we worthily be called colder than yron or yce. Paule for these causes commaundeth vs continually to pray. And let vs so remember to continue in prayer, that we be not overcome with distrust or impaciencie, and rashely prescribe God any tyme to heare or helpe vs in. For he sometime deferreth the helpe he promisseth vs, not bicause he meaneth to disappoynt them, that trust in him, but bicause he will exercise and trie our fayth: Examples wherof we haue both in Paule, in Abraham, in the woman of Chanaan, and in many others. Here therefore let vs bende the force of our fayth, and follow the example of that Widdow, by whose importunatenesse, Christ sayth the wicked Judge was overcome. But, O miserable and unhappie wretches that we be, which as we scarce, take vs vnto prayer, in extreame necessitie: so we by and by faint and giue ouer, if God doe not graunt our petitions at the first, being verie little mindefull of our state who being seruauntes, ought patiently to abyde our Lordes leysure, and not imperiously to appoynt him.

But let vs consider Ananias, which being overcome with feare of daunger, putteth of the expresse and euident commaundement of the Lord. For he sayth: Lorde, I haue hearde of this man by many, howe great euill he hath done to thy saintes at Hierusalem, and here hee hath power from the highe priestes, to binde all that call vpon thy name: He alleageth the testimonie of others, least he might seeme to feare in vaine. But it is a ridiculous matter to stande more vpon the testimonie of man, than vpon the worde of God. It is also ridiculous to rehearse Saules doings of others mouthes before the Lord, as though he had hitherto bene ignoraunt of them. But here vnto feare, a naughtie and foolish Counsaylor, vseth to bring vs, if we once take him to consult with, in discussing of Gods commaundements. Yet it appeareth by this example, that it taketh hold many times euen of holy men, and faythfull worshippers of God. With this feare we reade Abraham was so overcome, that he denyed Sara to be his wife. Moses stricken with lyke feare, can scarcely be induced to take vpon him the conduct and leading of the people of Israel. Elias the Prophete tasted of this feare, when after the slaughter of Baals Priestes, he wist not whither to flie for feare of Iesabell the Quenes manaces and threats. Iona also deceyued through feare, promised himself more safetie among the foulds of the sea, and barbarous shipmen, than in the ayde and vocation of the Lord. Here might also be brought forth the examples of others, both Prophetes and Apostles. But this is mans infirmitie, for the which, no man is rashely to be condemned, bicause we see many tokens hereof appeared in Christ also, when the houre of his death drew nigh. We must take heede that we be not so overcome herewith, that we leaue the charge inioyned vs of the Lord. But rather hauing a respect to the prouidence of God, committe our selues wholly to the will of God, as Christ teacheth his Apostles. Wherevnto also are to be referred the general promises of Gods helpe, which promise them that walke in his vocation, sure and certaine ayde and succour. And herewith I beleue Ananias also was confirmed, who although at the first, seemed somewhat timorous, yet he yeldeth to God being instant vpon him, and the seconde tyme of commaunding, he faythfully obeyeth him.

It is a singuler consolation, wherewith the Lord comforteth Ananias

1. Thel. 5.

Luke. 18.

Ananias fearefully draweth backe.

Gene. 12. 20

Exod. 3. 4.

1. Reg. 19.

Math. 10.

The Lord comforteth Ananias.

waivering and fearefull minde. Go (sayth he) for he is a chosen vessell vnto mee, to beare my name before the Gentiles, and kinges, and children of Israell. For I will shewe him, howe great thinges he must suffer for my names sake. It seemeth there are two reasons alleaged, wherefore Ananias ought not to feare, and both of them are taken of Paules person. first he sayth he is not a Tyranne and persecutor, as he was heretofore, but of the number of the elect, & hereafter should be a most valiant and faithfull defender of Christes name. Then that there is so little feare to be had of any persecution to be made by Paul, that rather he had to suffer many thinges for y name of Christ.

The prayse
of Paule.

These wordes contayne a singuler and worthie prayse of Paule, which we ought diligently to consider, both for that the excellencie of Gods goodnesse may the better be knowne, and also that we may vnderstande howe great authoritie Paules doctrine is of.

A chosen vef.
c.ii.

first he is called after an Hebrue phrase, the vessell of election, that is to say, a chosen, picked, or culled instrument. for the Hebrues by this name vessell, vnderstande all kinde of instruments, vtensiles, or implements. And they vse the Genitiue case of the Substantiue, for the Adiectiue. Men are called the vesselles or instrumentes of God, bicause God executeth hys iudgements by them. So Paule otherwheres calleth the elect, the vessells of glorie and mercie, and againe the reprobates the vessells of wrath. And Senacherib, by the same reason is called the rodde of Gods furie. Christ calleth Paule, a chosen vessell, bicause he executed many thinges by him, yea, most wholesome workes in setting forth the Gospell and the sayth. In the meane season this word vessell or instrument teacheth vs to remember our state and condition, that if we haue any thing in vs that is excellent, wee should not thinke it to be ours, but learne to giue all the prayse and glorie vnto God, who hath boughsed to vse their helpe. The reprobates and such, as want the knowledg of God, vnderstande not this: therefore they attribute to their owne power and witte, whatsoeuer is of any excellencie in them. But howe much such doing displeaseth the Lorde, Senacherib the Assirian, and Nabuchodonosor the Babilonian, aboundantly testifie. Paule much better weighed these thinges, which plainely confesseth, that he is by the grace of God, whatsoeuer he is. The same teacheth all Ministers, that they must arrogate nothing to themselues, or to others, but that they remember all effect and successe of Ministerie commeth of the Lorde, which giueth the increase. The consideration hereof, serueth very much to make men humble in heart and minde. for it maketh them to take heede, that they erre not in pride or securitie, and so become the vessells and instruments of wrath.

Rom. 9.

Esay. 10.

Esay. 10.

Dan. 4.

1. Cor. 3.

Paule ap-
pointed to
preach the
Gospell.

Secondlye, Christ declareth the ende and vse of this instrument, and sheweth that Paule is appoynted to beare his name, that is to aduance and extoll his name before the Gentyles, and kinges, and people of Israel. He vnderstandeth the preaching of the Gospell, whereby Christes name vseth to be extolled and celebrated, when repentance and remission of sinnes is preached in him. Here all Ministers are admonished of their dutie. To them it belongeth to beare the name of Christ; that is to preache him to be a Saviour, King and Priest, and to declare that all thinges that appertayne to our saluation, are in him. So Paule sayth, he knoweth nothing but Iesus Christ, and him crucified. The same, sayth he, reioyceth

1. Cor. 2.

Galar. 6.

only

onely in the crosse of Christ. The same name did Peter cary, where he sayde there was none other name vnder heauen giuen vnto manne, in which he coulde be saued. Wherby we gather that they be not the ministers of Christ, but ledde with the spirit of Antichrist, that declare any other name where in repentance and forgiveness of sinnes is preached. See concerning these men. 1. Iohn. 4. Let Ministers remember also, that they must not cary this name into corners, but before Nations, Kings, and Iewes. For although we be not all Apostles, yet it apperfayneth to all Ministers not to be ashamed of Christ, but to speake of the testimonies of the Lorde (as Dauid sayth) before Kings and Princes: being readye to giue an account of our sayth to euery one that asketh vs. And with howe great trust and diligence, Paule discharged the office committed to him of Christ, the Text shall declare. For he confesseth that from Ierusalem and the coastes rounde about to Illyricum, he filled all Countries with the Gospell.

Thirdly, least any man might thinke that so great a Minister of Christ was endued with any priuiledge of immunitie, to escape alway frae, he maketh mention also of his afflictions. I (sayth he) will shewe vnto him howe great things he shall suffer for my sake. Which wordes haue in them no commination, but a promise. For first we knowe that Christ maketh them partakers of his glorie, whome he doth boughthe to haue parteners of his crosse. In so much that Paule afterwarde commendeth the Philippians for this cause, that it was giuen them not onely to beleue in the Lord, but also to suffer for his sake. Further, he sayth he shall be inuincible, & promisseth him his succor and ayde in bearing the crosse, Paule himselfe shall be the best expositor of this saying, which writing vnto the Corinthians sayth: Of the Iewes, fye times, receyued I euery time fourtie stripes save one. Thryse was I beaten with rodde: I was once stoned: I suffered thryse shipwracke: Night and daye haue I bene in the deepe sea: in iourneying often: in perils of waters: in perils of robbers: in icoperdies of myne owne Nation: in icoperdies among the heathen: in perils in the Citie, in perils in wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. &c. See the place. 2. Cor. 11. and 12. Furthermore, these things teach vs, that the Gospell can not be preached without the crosse and tribulation. For this worlde cannot abyde the lyght thereof, bicause the workes thereof bee naught. Therefore euen as Paule in this place, so Christ in euery place admonisheth those that be his to beare the Crosse. Therefore they be most foolish of all other men, which thinke that in the ministerie of the Gospell, the matter may be brought to passe without daunger, and go about to please the worlde. Nay, he shall be little merite for this office and function, except he well haue prepared himselfe to beare the crosse, and all kinde of aduersities. Touching which point, see Luke. xiiij. Let vs remember that God onely giueth vs power and strength, whose loue wherewith he loued vs, if we well perceyue, we shall be prepared and ready to all assaies, as Paule afterwarde teacheth. Let vs therefore make our continuall prayers vnto him, that he will graunt vnto vs to be able both to suffer for the name of Christ, and also to come to the inheritance of heauen with him: to whome all prayse, honor, power, and glory, is due for euer. Amen.

Actes. 4.

1. Pet. 2.

Rom. 15.

Paule is most strong in bearing of the crosse.

Iohn. 3.

Roma. 8.

The.lxxij Homely

And Ananias went his waye, and entred into the house, and put his hands on him and sayde: Brother Saule, the Lorde that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayst receyue thy sight, and be filled with the holy ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes, as it had bene scales, and he receyued sight, and arose and was baptised, and receyued meate and was comforted. Then was Saule a certayne dayes with the Disciples which were at Damasco. And streyghwayes hee preached Christ in the Sinagoges, howe that he was the sonne of God. But all that heard him were amazed and sayde: Is not this hee that spoyled them which called on thys name in Ierusalem, and came hither for that intent, that hee myght bring them bounde vnto the high Priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Iewes which dwelt at Damasco, affirming that this was very Christ.



The Euangelist Luke describeth the conuersion of the Apostle Paule very diligently, partly, for that we myght vnderstande thereby what grace and goodnesse God sheweth vnto sinners, and partly for that Pauls doctrine myght be of the more authoritie with vs, as which he commendeth vnto vs with so earnest protestation, that he sayth, an Angell of heauen is not to be beleued, that woulde teache the contrary.

To both these appertaine that singuler and notable testimonie, wherewith Christ, as we hearde yester day, set forth Paule. For he calleth him a chosen vessell, who a little before seemed to be the vessell of wrath. Furthermore, he attributeth to him in handling of his affayres, sayth, dexteritie, constancie & paciency of mynde. Whereby we gather, that the goodnesse of God towarde sinners is great, and that we maye not contemne the doctrine of Paule, vntlesse we will contumeliously siue against Christ, and accuse his testimonie of falsheode. But let vs see this present place, which comprehendeth the restitution of Paule, and the first thing he did in his Apostleship or ministerye of the Gospell.

Concerning Pauls restitution, which was three dayes blynde, and at length receyued hys sight agayne, and was by baptisme receyued into the Church of Christ, the persons both of Ananias and Paule are to be considered, with the marueylous effect which the Euangelist sayth by and by folowed. But first we will speake of Ananias, whose ministry it pleased God herein to vse. He as it is sayde, went his waye, and entred into the house of Iudas, where he hearde that Paule was lodged. The earnest repeating of Gods commaundement did put from him the stupiditie that he was in before, neyther alleageth he any more the talke of the people, or the reasons of fleshye wisdom agaynst the commaundements of the Lorde, which mynde we may see in all the true worshippers of God, which haue this speciall care, that no feare withholdeth them from the dutie of obedience which they owe vnto God. Let vs also imitate these people, and knowe that they are unworthy of all pardon and excuse, who are so overcome of the infir-

r. Paule is
restored and
baptised.

The obedie
nce of Ana
nias.

mitie

mitie of the fleſhe, and feare of daunger, that they forget and denye God, and the dutie they owe vnto him. Further, Ananias layeth his handes vpon Saule, whych ceremonie is for good purpoſe borrowed of the olde teſtament, in the ordering and making of our Miniſters. For in tymes paſt the prieſts layde their handes vpon the ſacrifices, wherewith declaring that the thing which they did, was in the behalfe of all the people, and ſo conſecrated the beaſtes ſtanding at the aultar vnto God. By a lyke reaſon the publike cure and charge of the Church, is commended vnto the Miniſters, by impoſition of handes, and they are thereby admoniſhed to remember howe they be conſecrated vnto God, and that therfore they muſt apply all their ſtudy, care, labour, and watching, to ſet forth the glory of God. But bicauſe there is no uſe or profite of a bare ceremonie, Ananias ioyneth the word thereto, wherby he declareth to him whatſoeuer Chriſt commaunded him to ſay. Wherein the bolde courage of Ananias is to be conſidered, who plainly profeſſeth the name of Jeſus Chriſt, and acknowledgeth himſelfe to be his ſeruaunt, before him, whome he knewe hitherto to be Chriſtes mortall enimie. Agayne, bicauſe he had hearde what teſtimonie Chriſt gaue of Paule, he diſdayneth not to call him brother. Therefore in Miniſters a ſtrong and bolde courage of minde muſt be ioyned with a gentle and milde facility of ſpeech: leaſt either they ſuffer themſelues to be beaten from the confeſſion of Chriſt, and hys due obedience, or elſe through their hatotie poſt and ouermuch ſeueritie, drive them awaye whome they ought to embrace as brethren, and by all meanes to winne vnto Chriſt.

The impoſition of laying on of handes.

Preaching of the worde.

Scales fall from Pauls eyes.

Vnto theſe premiſſes Luke ioyneth a marueylous ſucceſſe. For he ſheweth that there fell from the eyes of Paule, a thing as it had bene ſcales, and that then by & by he had his ſight againe. He maketh mention of ſcales, to thende we myght vnderſtande, that his eyes were not lightly blaſted, as beſeth to be in lightning, but that he was ſtriken into a great and marueylous blindeneſſe. And it is not without a great marueyle, that wythin ſo fewe dayes, ſcales coulde gather on his eyes, ſo to take his ſight from him. And it is no leſſe marueylous, to ſee, that he is ſo ſoone agayne reſtored to the ſight which he had loſt. In the meane ſeaſon it appeareth that Chriſt would after a ſort admoniſhe Paule of the ſtate he lyued in, being in his Iudaisme or Phariſeiſme. For when he was Gamaliel his ſcholer, he profited ſo incredibly amonge his fellowes, that he ſeemed to be wyſer, and to ſee more than all they. But that wiſedome which ſo highly pleaſed him, was meere blyndenefſe. For the bayle was yet drawne before his eyes, wherby the Jewes were hindered that they coulde not ſee Moſes face: bicauſe they wanted the knowlege of Chriſt, in whome God the father hath giuen vs that heauenly light, which is able to put awaye all darkeneſſe of ignorance and carnall zeale. Bicauſe this lyght began to ſhine on Paule, ſcales fell from his eyes, and he ſeeeth that hitherto he had bene ſowly and miſerably beguyled with the blinde zeale of ignorance. Therefore whoſoeuer will continue in fayth and ſaluation without falling, let him followe that lyght which is Chriſt, and walke in him. See Iohn. i. 8. and. 12. Chapters.

2. Cor. 3.

But what doth Paule after he had receyued hys ſight? He ariſeth, is baptiſed, eateth, and is made whole. Firſt he ſayth he was baptiſed, bicauſe he was hereof admoniſhed by Ananias, as himſelfe witneſſeth in the .xxij. of the Actes. Nowbeit, ſome will ſaye, baptiſme was ſuperfluous in him, who

Paule is baptiſed.

Chriſt

Christ knewe was a chosen vessel; who had felt the marueylous power of Christ, who was not endued with the holy ghost; and whose eyes aswell of the mynde, as of the body, the Lorde had lyghtened. But the Saintes iudge nothing superfluous and vnprofitable, which they knowe is ordeyned of God. And bicause they reade that the obseruing of the thinges that were ordeyned in the olde Testament, till the tyme of correction was commaunded, with such seueritie that it was death to transgresse them, they woulde neuer take vpon them to neglect any of the thinges which Christ deliuered, to be obserued till the ende of the worlde. Therefore the impudencie and rashnesse of those which now a dayes contemne the vse of baptisme and the Lordes supper, is execrable, and herein they declare, what perfection of fayth they are of, in that they dare wickedlye despyse the ordinaunces of the Lorde.

Whereouer, Paule taketh meate, and refresheth and chaereth his decayed strength of body. The Saintes therefore vse the thinges which serue for preservation of their health, and which God hath giuen vs for that vse: such as are meate and drinke, clothing, and all kyndes of such lyke. So Paule admonisheth Timothy, to vse Wine nowe and then bicause of the cruditie and rawnesse of his stomack. By these examples is the piewish superstition of them confuted, whych bicause they abstayne from things necessarye, attribute to themselves the tytle of singuler holynesse. For although we condemne not fasting, whereby the pryde of our wanton fleshe is subdued and tamed, the rather to obey Christ: so we allowe not those which set merite in that, that by Gods worde is no where commaunded. For to such men agreeth that saying of the Lorde: when ye eate and drinke, doe yee not eate and drinke for your owne selues? By the which reason may be sayde to these also: when ye fast, ye fast for your selues. Yea, Paule teacheth vs to beware of those, which bidde vs after a superstitious sort to abstaine from certayne thinges, and sayth they bring the doctrine of Devils, which commaunde vs to abstayne from meates created of God, for mans vse.

But let vs go on in the treatise of this present place, and consider the first thing that Paule doth in the ministry of the Gospell, of whome two thinges are reported. First it is sayde he was conuersant with the Disciples, that is to saye, the Christians that were at Damascus. Then he ioyned not himselfe to the Jewes or Gentyles, which were the publike enemies of Christ, but vnto the faythfull and such as professed the name of Christ. We are hereby taught, that they that will be taken for Christians, ought to vse the company of the godly, and to abstaine from them whome they knowe to be the professed enemies of Christ. For although the godly are permitted to keepe company with infidels as farre forth as necessitie requyrez: yet the faythfull finde that the company they keepe with them without necessitie, for worldly friendshippe and pleasures sake, is to their hurt and hindrance. We reade that Jesus Christ was diuers times at the Phariseyes tables, and at publyke feastes. But it is euident it was not for the satisfying of his owne pleasure, but to winne them to saluation. For he neuer was so forgetfull of his dutie, to wyne at their errorrs, but he woulde powder their table talke with wholesome precepts, and the mysteries of the kingdome of God. And if any seeke the companie of the vngodly for thys ende, we allowe their purpose and endeuour. But they that winke at the

blasphemy

Paule refresheth himselfe with meate.

Paule refresheth himselfe with meate.

1. Tim. 5.

zach. 7.

Colof. 2.

1. Tim. 4

1. The first thing that Paule did in his Apostolicall ship.

blasphemies of the wicked, their abominable ydolatrie, their foolish superstition, most corrupt maners, and filthy desires of a dastardly and sluggish minde, to saeme trimme companions, and enioy their friendship and fauor, we alleage to them that saying of Dauid, which accounteth them among the citizens of heauen, that despyse the wicked, and make much of them that feare the Lorde. The same sayth: all his delyght is in the Saintes that are in the earth. For why shoulde we see Christes souldiour in Antichristes tentes sitting ydle: why shoulde he suffer their doings and sayings which he knoweth to deface the honoz and glory of Christ:

Secondly, he speaketh of Paules doctrine, which worthily is placed first in this dving: he sayth he preached openly in the Synagoges. And what did this newe Apostle preache: Verily Jesus to be the sonne of God and Christ. These things he taught not after a slender and colde sort, but so confirmed them with Scriptures and arguments, that he utterly confounded the Jewes, that were Christes greatest enimies, and made them in a doubt of their religion.

In these thinges we haue a compendious abridgement of Paules doctrine, which ought to be of great authoritie with vs. He confesseth otherwheres, that he knoweth nothing but Jesus Christ. Therefore him whom he onely knew, he thought best onely to preach. He comprehendeth in few, yea in two poyntes, whatsoeuer is at large sayde of him, both in the Prophetes and Apostles writings. For first he teacheth, that Jesus which was borne of the Virgin Marie, was the sonne of God. So he hath herein comprised whatsoeuer belongeth to the knowlege of Christes person. Wherein if we acknowledge not the humaine and diuine nature togither, the reason of our saluation cannot stande safe and sure, which all the Scripture sayth dependeth on Christ onely. Paule acknowledgeth both these natures. For howe can he but acknowledge his humaine nature, which intreateth of him that was taken and crucified by the Jewes, and who he knewe dyed, and who elsewhere he testifieth was borne of the Jewes, concerning hys manhode: But where he sayth, he is the sonne of God, he cannot denie his diuinitie. For what other thing should be borne of God, than God: So he taught that Jesus was both God and man: God from euerlasting, and in a tyme therevnto ordeyned made man, as otherwhere he sheweth. Furthermore, he declared his office, and sheweth that he was Christ, that is, the annoynted of God. Kinges and Priestes in tyme past were annoynted, according to an auncient and olde vsage. And bicause the sauour promised to mankinde must be both a King, and a Priest, therefore God woulde haue him called by the name of Melsias, or Christ, that is to say, annoynted. The other poynt of Paules doctrine is, that this Jesus, which is true God and man, was also that promised Sauour of the worlde, whome the ceremonies of the lawe did shadowe, and the oracles of the Prophetes sayde was to come. And this is that doctrine, that deserueth onely to be called Apostolike. For it agreeth with that confession, that Peter being demaunded of Christ, made in the name of all the Apostles, saying: Thou art Christ, that sonne of the liuing God. And thou hast the wordes of eternall life. And thys is that sayth, which is buylt vpon Christ, that is, the rocke which cannot swarne, and agaynst which the gates of Hell cannot preuaile. Therefore whosoever will be taken for the true worshipper of Christ, and reioyce in the

Psalme. 15.
Psalme. 16.

Paule preacheth Jesus.

The summe
of the Apostles doctrine
1. Cor. 2.

Roma. 9.

Gala. 4.

Math. 16.
Iohn. 6.

Galat. 1.

Paule confuteth the Jewes

How the gospell ought to be preached.

Titus. 1.

2. Tim. 3.

The effect of Pauls preaching.

the Apostolike faith, let them constantly keepe this doctrine. For it is plaine, that Paule pronounced of this doctrine, that if an Aungell from heauen preach any other Gospell than this, he is to be helde accursed.

But did Paule superficially, and by the way propose this doctrine: No, But bicause there were at Damascus scholes of the Jewes, through whose dotages the knowledge of Iesus Christ was defaced, he thought good to confute them, and to confirme the true doctrine of Christ with authoritie of the scriptures. For it is euident that the Jewes did acknowledge the auncient promises of the Melsias. But bicause they imagined he shoulde be an earthly Prince onely, which shoulde restore that auncient kingdome of the Jewishe Nation, and the maiestie thereof, and deliuer them from the yoke of the Romane bondage: they could neuer synde in their heart to acknowledge Iesus, whose coming to them was so poore, his conuersation so humble, and his death so reprochfull, to be their Melsias. The errors of these men Paule stoutly withstandeth, and affirmeth this Iesus to be the sonne of God and the Melsias, with such authoritie of Scripture, and number of arguments, that he greatly molested and shamed the best learned of them, which hitherto vsed to deny the same. Which thing commeth to passe to all them who thynke it a shame to yelde vnto Christ, and to the truth.

This place teacheth vs howe the doctrine of the Gospell shoulde be preached, wherein some be of this opinion, that they thinke a playne and simple exposition of the mysteries of saluation, is sufficient, and that they which reprove the tyrannie of Antichrist and his superstition, labour in vayne, and are authors of intollerable discention. And in dede a playne and simple teaching of our saluation woulde suffice, if there were not such as woulde obscure and deface it with errors, and laboured to pull awaye the vntwarie from the right waye. But where both there haue bene such, and euerywhere at this daye be such, the faythfull must be admonished that they giue no eare to them. And this shall a man neuer be able to doe, vnlesse he shewe how they are altogether decepted. Agayne, where some are growne so impudent, that they dare openly speake agaynst the truth, they must be also openly confuted, least by their boldnesse they cause the truth to come in suspicion. We reade that both Christ and his Apostles vsed both these wayes, whose example they ought of dutie to followe, which will be called and taken for Ministers of his Church, which is the cause that Paule will haue such to be teachers, as are able not onely to instruct the rauer sort in sounde doctrine, but also to refell and conuince them that speake agaynst it. And he sayth the Scriptures are giuen vs to that ende, to confute the aduersaries thereof. Which thing seemed of such importance to the holy ghost, that he woulde haue the Apostles not only to reprove the deceyuers in those dayes, but also woulde haue vs warned of those which shoulde disturbe the Church in the later dayes. With what right therefore can they which will haue no mannes impietie detected, commaunde the Ministers to silence, where such menne as these now a dayes beare swaynge in the Church.

Nowe let vs see the effect or successe of this meeting together. All they (sayth Luke) that hearde him were amazed and sayde: Is not this hee that made hauocke at Ierusalem of them, &c. Here he speaketh of the godlye, hauing hereafter to intreate of the wicked attemptes of the vngodlye. They

com=

compare Paules doing nowe wyth those thinges that were past, and so they finde the greater cause to wonder: Paule sayth in another place that they glorified God in him. By which example we are by the waye taught, that we so ought to reuerence the Saintes, that we must yet giue all the glorie and prayse vnto God, who hath boughsed so to endue them with hys grace. Furthermore Paules ensample teacheth vs, that no man shoulde be ashamed to forsake and improve his knowne errors. For although thys seeme to many men a signe of an inconstant and impudent mynde: yet is it our dutie so to doe, both for Gods cause and our neyghbors. He commaundeth vs willingly to yelde vnto the truth, and to bring our neyghbour out of error. Therfore it is the heynousest impietie & impudencie in the world, for a man stiffely to holde and continue in knowne errors, and (as God accuseth them by his Prophete) to winke when they may plainly see. It is our duties to acknowledge Iesus whome Paule preached to be the sonne of God and Christ, and to trust in hym, and serue him, that we may hereafter lyue in heauen with him: to whom be all prayse, honour, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

Galat.1.

The.lxvij. Homelie.

AND after a good whyle, the Iewes tooke counsaile togyther, to kill him, but Saule knewe of their laying awayte. And they watched the gates daye and night to kill him. Then the Disciples tooke him by night, and lette him downe in a basket ouer the wall. And when Saule was come to Ierusalem, he assayed to ioyne himselfe to the Disciples, but they were all afrayde of him, and beleued not that he was a Disciple. But Barnabas tooke him and brought him to the Apostles, and declared to them how he had seene the Lorde in the waye, and that he had spoken to him, and howe hee had done boldly at Damasco in the name of Iesu. And hee had his conuersation wyth them at Ierusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lorde Iesu. And hee spake and disputed agaynst the Greekes, but they went about to slea him, which when the brethren knewe, they brought him to Casarea, and sent him forth to Tharsus.



S Luke hath bene very diligent in describing Paules conuersion: so hath hee (as you haue hearde) declared his doctrine wyth no lesse diligence. The summe whereof was, that Iesus which was borne of Marie the Virgin, was also the Sonne of God, and Christ, that is to saye, our King and our Priest, and that Redeemer that once was promised vnto mankinde. Thys agreeth with the confession of the Apostles, which we reade

Peter made in the name of them all, and comprehendeth also in it the whole order of our saluation, as was sayd in the last sermon. Wherefore as Paule otherwheres teacheth, it becometh vs to vse such constancie in retayning and keeping thys doctrine, that we be not drabone from it by the authoritie of any man, no not of an Angell. And bicause Chryst sayde Paule should be a chosen vessel, the Euangelyst in thys place rehearseth a brieue declarati-

on of the things done about the beginning of his Apostleshippe, to declare thereby what faith and industrie he vsed in answering to so great a commendation of Christ. Thys narration is the diligentler to be considered, bicause it plainly teacheth howe variable and grievous the misfortunes of the faythfull ministers of Christ be in thys lyfe, and howe faythfully he aydeth them being in daunger for the gloze of hys name, according to hys promyse.

The order of
the hystorie is
opened.

And Luke beginneth hys discourse wyth the thinges that came to passe vnto Paule at Damascus. But before we report his words, the course of the hystorie must be set in order, whych, it appeareth Luke obserued not verpe greatly, as who was not purposed particulerly to rehearse all the thinges that were done, but onely to declare such thynges as myght suffice for the instruction of the Church. And he plainly declareth that he hath wittinglye and willingly pretermitted many thinges, forasmuch as he confesseth that the things which he here rehearseth came to passe many dayes after Pauls conuersion. Wherfore we must perclose & make by the order of the hystory, out of the things which Paule himselfe rehearseth of his owne doings. Writing vnto the Galathians, first he sayth, he went from Damascus into Arabia, before he came to Ierusalem. As he returned out of Arabia (where it is credible he preached Christs gospel) to Damascus, he then fell into this daunger which he here speaketh of. The authoꝝ whereof, as it is here sayde, the Jewes were. But in hys later Epistle to the Corinthians the. xij. Chap. he sayth this ambushe to take him was layde, by king Aretas his Lieutenant. Wherby we gather, that the Jewes suborned him thus to doe, wher vnto for thys cause they might the more easily perswade him, for that Paule had aduentured to preach the Gospel in Arabia, which was vnder the king Aretas hys obeysance. Therefore Luke hath omitted Pauls voyage into Arabia, which of force must be ended, before he was in this hazarde, forasmuch as shortly after his escape, it is sayde he came to Ierusalem.

Christs mi-
nisters abyde
persecution.

Iohn. 15.

Persecutors
are bydded by
the hands of
God.

Furthermore, touching the present hystorie, the chiefe point thereof is, to note what men may looke for of the worlde, as soone as they ioyne themselves vnto Christ. For where Christ consecrateth to hymselfe onely those whome he chooseth out of the worlde, the worlde afterwarde cannot abyde them, as he teacheth. And there are euerywhere so manye examplis to proue this true, that it is marueile to see how so many at this day are offended with those aduersities which the Scripture giueth by warning of so often, and wherewith all the faythfull of Christ haue bene so inbred from the first beginning of the worlde. In the meane season let vs obserue that Luke sayth these things came to passe a good while after, or after a certaine daies. Therfore Paule had a time giuen him to preach in, and in the meane whyle God stayed the rage of hys enemies, which vndoubtedly woulde haue stopped him at the beginning, but that they were kepte backe with the byddle that he layde on them. Whereby we learne that the wicked cannot alwaye doe what they lyst, nor that they seemed chiefly most able to doe. For the like reason may be made of them as is of their heade. For as Satan is vnder the power of Gods prouidence, and can doe nothing agaynst man, but by Gods sufferance: so the Lord byddeth tyrants, mauger all their might, and will they, nill they, and that many tymes in such unknowne wyse, that they themselves marueyle how their deuises come no better to passe, which they

they see no manne is able to withstande, but yet see not God, which bleseth to bring them to naught. Therfore let vs allway set Gods prouidence before our eyes, as often as we heare the enterprises of the enimies of the word, and let vs remember that the heares of our heade be numbred in his sight.

But what dyd the faythfull at Damascus, whyle the wicked enimies lay wayte for Paule? Doe they forsake hym or leaue him succourlesse? Or vse they that saying of the Lorde, resist not agaynst euill? Or be they so carelesse, that they looke for helpe from the Lorde, doing noz daring to doe nothing themselves for Paule in the meane season? Here is no such thing sayde of them. Naye, they aduenture to deliuer Paule, with the daunger of their owne liues, yea, transgressing the common lawe which commaundeth the walles to be inuiolable. For it appeareth that our auncestors counted the walles and gates of Cities amongst things that were holy, and consecrated their walles vnto the Gods, verily, for that they knewe (as the Lawyer sayth) that mans affaires coulde by mans industrie be sufficiently gouerned and ordered of any one, in so great falschod of men, the citizens sometime being so negligent, & the borderers about them being so malicious & enuious. Therfore to leape ouer the walles, or to breake open y gates of a city, was death although no other trespassse had bene comitted. Yet these brethren bled a godly and holy ordering of the matter without contempt of the ciuile lawes, & therfore deserue to be excused. For they saw that more regard was to be had of Gods law, which biddeth vs to succour them that be in perill, & commaundeth vs so to obserue mans lawe, that we displace not Gods law, or preiudice the good and godly. Therfore, to the intent he might escape this present daunger, they let him dotorie ouer the walles in a basket, and Paule refuseth not the benefite thus offered him. By the which example first we are taught that sometime Christian men, yea, Ministers of the worde may by flying, prouide for themselves, and not rashly put themselves in ieopardie of death. For we both reade that Christ oftentimes fledde, when he conueyed himselfe from the Jewes lying in wayte, and from the rage of Herode, and also warned his Disciples, to take heed of men, and when persecution ariseth, to flie from one Citty to another. And yet we must be well aduised that we flie not when our tarying maye set forth the glorie of God, and doth not pull vs from the office and dutie wherein the Lorde hath appoynted vs. For whilste we haue aduigent eye to these two things when we flie, we shall shamefully betray the glorie of God, and forgetting our dutie, neglect the saluation of them, whome we ought to holde moste deare. Paule had a consideration of both these things, forasmuch as when he fled, there were notwithstanding at Damascus, which set forth Challes quarrell, and Paule gaue not himselfe to shamefull ydlenesse, but both at Ierusalem, and elsewhere set forth the doctrine of saluation with great fruite and vilitie, as the hystorie following sheweth.

Moreover, the faythfull are admonished of that dutie, that the Lorde hath bounde them in, to their teachers. He requireth that they shall prouide for the safetie of their Ministers, with the perill of their owne life. For it is playne, they are to be accounted as our parentes, because through their ministerie (as Paule sayth) we are bozne againe to eternall life. Therefore the ingratitude and falschode of those, which as soone as persecution ariseth, let go their bridled tongues, against the ministers of Gods worde, and

Psal. 33.

Math. 10.

The brethren
at Damasco
set Paule at
libertie.

Math. 10.

The godlye
must defende
and deliuer
their Minis-
ters.

1. Cor. 4.

Galat. 4.

Esa. 49.

Paule com-
meth to Ieru-
salem.
Galat. 1.

The Disci-
ples are as-
fraid of
Paule.
Math. 10.

Luke. 16.

2. Cor. 11.

1. Tim. 3.

Barnabas es-
tablisheth Saul.

redeme and purchase to themselves peace with their liues is most shame-
full. But if it be the dutie of a priuate person to defende the Ministers with
the perill of his owne life, howe much more is it to be required of the ciuill
magistrates, whom Christ once promised should be the Purse and defen-
ders of his Church: Wherefore their opinion is playne foolishhe, which saue
the Magistrates ought not to defende religion by walles and fight, where-
as the brethren at Damascus brake the religion of walles with great com-
mendation, in the defence of Paule onely.

Furthermore, Luke declareth what Paule did after his prosperous escape
out of Damascus, saying he came to Ierusalem, which came to passe in the
iiii. yere after his conuersion, as himselfe writeth. Where when he would
haue ioyned himselfe to the Disciples, and chiefly to Peter, they mistrusted
him bicause of hys former tyrannie vsed agaynst those that beleued in
Christ. But Barnabas (of whom mention was made in the ende of the fourth
Chapter) hauing better intelligence of his doings, commended his mini-
sterie with great prayse vnto the Apostles, namely to Peter and Iames,
whome onely Paule sayeth he sawe of all the Apostles beside, writing to
the Galathians. Therefore remayning with them fiftene dayes space, he
boldly maintayned Christes religion, till he was agayne layde wayte for,
and compelled to fle.

Here we haue to consider the Disciples at Ierusalem, who Luke writ-
teth were afraid of Paule. This was no dastardly feare, but such a feare
as Christ commendeth, where he requireth of hys people the wysedome
of Serpents. For where it was scarce credible that so cruell a tyrant could
so sodeinly be chaunged, they thought they had good cause to beware, least
he might beguyle them vniawares. For they knewe that saying of Christ,
which testifieth that the children of this worlde are wyser in their generation,
than the children of light. But afterwarde being enformed of the truth, they
embrace him courteously, as a brother and fellowe. In these thinges we
haue an example both of Christian prudence and charitie, whereby we are
taught howe both these vertues must be coupled together. For where all
men are lyers, they knowe that they ought not rashly to beleue euery one,
that coulde egregiously counterfeyte godlynesse. For what great harme
false brethren doe, Paule himselfe confesseth, that he had proued to his great
perill. And for that cause he biddeth vs to beware of newe brethren or
yong scholers, and will haue him that desireth to be a Bishop, to haue the
commendation of them that be abrode and without. Agayne, we must take
heede of that ouer great rigour, wherewith many are so stiffly hardened, that
they thinke all straungers and unknowen persons ought at once to be re-
iect. For as it is the dutie of Christian charitie to thinke well of all men:
so it easily admitteth the honest and credible testimonie, giuen of unknowen
brethren. Let vs therefore vse this moderation at these dayes, seeing the
banished for Christes sake wander by and downe euerywhere, and let vs
not yelde to their sentences, which on both sides being to extreame, eyther
through their ouer much facilitie cause all men to laugh at them, or by their
to great austeritie, reiect all men without any difference.

Moreover, Barnabas is to be considered, who as before of his libera-
litie he relieved the neede of the whole Church, and therefore was called
the childe of Consolation, so now by his testimonie he maintaineth Pauls

good

good name being in daunger, and is not ashamed of him whome he knewe every body suspected. This dede of charitie is singuler and very necessary, bicause there is scarce anything amongst men more ryfe, than sinister and wrong suspicion. For as being blinded with selfeloue, we flatter our selues: so we diligently note other mennes maners, and seeke every little occasion howe to backbite their good name. Therefore great is their offence which aggrauate the faultes of them that are wrongfully suspected, whose good name and fame they rather ought to tender and defende.

Thirldy, let vs consider Paule, who Luke writeth, declared his fayth at Ierusalem, by many and singuler vertues. And first he writeth howe he sought the familiaritie and company of the Church, and of Christes Disciples. This is worthy of singuler prayse, if a man consider howe Paule not long before was accounted amongst the chiefe of that Citie. But he iudging all worldly dignities worthy now to be stamped vnder his fete, is desirous to get Christ, and to be ioyned vnto his Church. See the thirde to the Philippians. Let vs lape this example before our eyes, when the glozy and friendship of this world inuegleth vs to forsake Christ. For although Christes flocke be but little, and the state of the Church seemeth but miserable and unhappie: yet is this the common saying of all that are godly, One day in thy Courtes is better than a thousande. I had rather be a doore keeper in the house of the Lorde, than to dwell in the tentes of the vngodly. Also Paule giueth vs a great argument of Christian modestie, while being suspected and reiected of the godly, he doth not stubboznelly murmur against them, nor immodestly setteth out his owne prayse, nor forsaketh the Church disdainfully, but patiently abideth all this doing. For remembryng his former lyfe, he marueyleth nothing at the matter. Yea, he acknowledgeth the iudgement of God, who woulde haue him so humbled and exercised, that he shoulde as it were, in humble and lowly wyse, seeke their societie, whome before he had disdainfully contemned, and cruelly persecuted. Let vs followe this example, as often as the iniurie that other doth vnto vs, griueth vs. And although we knowe our selues vniustly iniured by them, yet lette vs thinke we are not vnworthye of this iniurie, but that we haue deserued more than this, if God woulde deale with vs according to our deserts. Finally, when he seeth himselfe reconciled to the brethzen, he proueth himselfe in dede to be a true Disciple of Christ, for he speaketh freely and boldly in the name of Iesus Christ. This is a description of the Gospell, which preacheth to vs repentance and forgiveness of sinnes, in the name of Iesus Christ onely, as we haue oftentimes declared. He disputeth also with the Graekes, who we sawe heretofore were the authours of a murmur and grutch that greatly disquieted the Church. These men bled to mingle the lawe with the Gospell, and to overthrowe the fayth in Christ, with the iustification of workes. To the confutation of whome, Paule was appoynted, by the peculiar counsell of God, as his Epistles declare. This place teacheth vs, that saluation must so be preached in the name of Christ only, that therewithall we must also earnestly withstande all those things that maye overthrowe the same. Touching which poynt, bicause we haue intreated in the last Sermon, it shall suffice by the way to haue noted thus much.

But in the ende it is sayde, that Paule had no better successe at Ierusalem than he had before at Damascus. For the Jewes made a newe conspi-

racie

i. Paule des-
reth to be ioi-
ned vnto the
congregation

Psal. 84.

ii. Paule ta-
keth his res-
puls in good
part.

iii. He pre-
acheth boldly.

Actes. 6.

Paule hath
persecutors

at Jerusalem
also.

racie agaynst him, and woulde haue killed him. And these are the argumentes of hypocrites, which most egerly contending about the righteousnesse of workes, thinke it but a tryfle to flea innocentes, and to shed guiltlesse bloude. But here agayne appeareth the fayth and loue of the Disciples, which accompanie him to Casarea, and so sende him to Tharsus in Cilicia, which was Paules natie countrie. And here Paules constancie is worthy of singuler commendation; who being on euery side still in daunger, yet forsaketh not Christ and his fayth. For he knew by reading of the Prophetes, that many were the tribulations of the iust. He knewe that all they which professed Christ, were called to beare the crosse. He knewe also, that he had deserued much grievous punishment, because he had procured the like vnto the christians before. Wherefore he thought he ought rather to reioyce, seeing he suffered that for Christes sake, which God might haue layd on him as a punishment for his owne sinnes. Which consideration, if it were in our mindes, it woulde easily cause vs also not to be offended at any aduersitie. In the meane season Paule deserueth great prayse, for that according to Gods commaundement, when he had escaped, he preached the Gospell in Tharsus, being his owne countrie, as appeareth hereafter in the xxij. Chapter, following the example of Christ, who had a regarde of hys owne countrie, though it were ingratifull and unkinde. Lette vs imitate Paules fayth, godlynesse, and constancie. So shall it come to passe, that God being our protector and defender, we shall be deliuered from all the troubles of this lyfe present, and liue hereafter in heauen with Iesus Christ, the sonne of God, our only Sauour: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glozy for euer. Amen.

The.lxviij.Homelie.

THEN had the congregation rest throughout all Iurie, Galiley and Samarie, and were edified and walked in the feare of the Lord, and multiplied by the comfort of the holy ghost. And it came to passe as Peter walked throughout all quarters, he came also to the Saintes which dwelt at Lidda. And there he founde a certaine man named Aeneas, which had kept his bed cyght yeres, and was sicke of the palseye. And Peter sayde vnto him, Aeneas? The Lorde Iesu Christ make thee whole. Arise, and make thy bedde. And he arose immediatly. And all that dwelt at Lidda and Assaron sawe him, and turned vnto the Lorde.



WE haue hitherto scene the beginninges of the Apostle Paule, howe he entred hys Apostleshippe with great labors and daungers. For he was twyse in teoperdie of his lyfe, and twyse he escaped through the faythfull helpe and industrie of the Disciples, though not without their daunger. These things teach vs what troubles are ordeyned for the faythfull seruantes of Christ, whome yet it becommeth to folloze the constancie and fayth of Paule, that they suffer not themselues to be drawne from Christ, wyth any perils or aduersitie. For blessed is he which abydeth vnto the ende. But he that putteth

Luke. 9.

putteth his hande to the plough and looketh backe, thereby declareth sufficiently that he is not worthy and meete for the kingdome of heauen. But whereas the things hitherto declared, may seeme such, as threaten the vniuersall ruine and destruction of the Church: the godlye writer breaketh of the storie of Paule, and not without the instinct of the holy spirite, passeth to Peter the Apostle, and describeth the cherefuller successes of the Church, which shortly followed. In the consideration whereof, we ought to bee the more diligent, the more comfort they be able to minister vnto vs, wading in the waues of these tempestuous dayes.

He beginneth with the generall state and condicion of all the Churches gathered together and founded in Iurie, Galiley, and Samarie, and he declareth that there was a most ioyfull & prosperous ende of all the troubles and turmoyles which the enimies of the truth began. The Churches (sayth he) were at rest. This may seeme a sodeyne chaunge of thinges, and passing all expectation, if we consider the state of the Church before, and compare the fierce mindes of the enimies, their deuises and power, with the Church as it now was. But this is Gods blage, who hauing regarde to our infirmitie, intermedleth prosperitie with aduersitie, and suffereth vs not to bee tempted aboue our strength. And where afflictions abounde, there giueth most comfort. And this is no difficult thing for him to do, which euery day sheweth lyke examplers in things naturall. So, after Winter, being grievous to vs with frost and colde, commeth the delectable and pleasaunt Spring, the cherefull and mery Sommer, and fruitefull Haruest. So, after continuall showres, and horrible stormes of hayle, commeth comfortable Phœbus, and chaseth away the Clowdes. And Mariners when the terrores of tempests be ouerpast, haue afterwarde clere weather, and prosperous windes. And that the state of the Church is ruled by lyke interchaungeablenesse, the examplers of all ages testifie. But the only booke of Judges may abundantly suffice to approue the same. Let no man therefore be so abashed at the countenance of present calamitie, to thinke he must vtterly perishe. For either God will chere them in this lyfe with better successe of thinges, or else of his mercy, he will take them out of all the stormes of this world, into the inheritance of his heauenly kingdome. In the meane season, this place teacheth vs that the crosse is not alway such a marke of the Church, that it can neuer be without it: because we heare in this place, that the primitive Church had vniuersall peace, and the same came to passe also oftentimes in the yeres following. Therefore their iudgement is most wayne, who rashly condemne euery Church, which through the benefite of God enioyeth rest, and will graunt vnto Christians no tyme of breathing nor rest from the crosse. Agayne, we are admonished, that for the attayning of peace, there needeth neyther dastardly dissimulation, nor false abnegation of the fayth, but rather constancie and boldnesse to keepe the word and doctrine of faith. For Luke sayth that then peace ensued, after Paule had stirred the enimies of the truth, both at Damascus and at Ierusalem, with earnest preaching and disputation agaynst them. Therefore they that now a dayes woulde haue vs to dissemble the truth, and say that by our vehement inueyghing against errors and superstitions, we more exasperate and kindle the enimies mindes, talke altogether in wayne, as though God were not able to brydle and keepe vnder them, which in their rage doe nothing but threaten fire and

The Church
hath rest.

1. Cor. 10.

2. Cor. 1.

Psal. 94.

sword.

sworde. Naye, we are taught by examples, that they which for such mens sake, can finde in their hart to denye the fayth and truth, doe seldome finde them faythfull in friendship.

The fruite of
Ecclesiastical
peace.

Next, Luke declareth the fruite of the peace ensuing, forasmuch as he saith the congregations were edified. This may be vnderstanded two manner of wayes. For the Church is sayde to be edified, eyther when new belauers be added therevnto, or else when they which before beleued, through more plentifull gyftes of the holy ghost profite in the faith. And the holy ghost doth not without a cause vse this Metaphore of building, forasmuch as the Church is y^e house of god, which is builded of liuely stones, that is to say, of such as beleue in Christ (1. Timoth. 3. and. 1. Peter. 2.) and all the faythfull are called otherwheres, y^e Temple of the holy ghost. For the which cause, the teachers are called builders, and the building of y^e church is called the building of God. Furthermore, beside that by this example, it appeareth howe the enterprises of Christes enimies in pulling downe the church are in bayne, we are also taught what oughte to be the ende and marke of all them which beare office in the Church. Paule diligently inculcateth the same speaking of the publike exercises of the Church, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians and. xiii. Chapter. Herevnto let all Ministers apply themselues with all their power, both with teaching and reprovuing, and let them alwayes remember this saying of Paul, that they haue power giuen them to edifie and not to destroy. Let them therefore suffer nothing in the Church, that serueth to the destruction thereof. Let Kinges and Magistrates haue the same ende before them, whome the Lorde hath appoynted to be the Nurses of his Church, as we haue already oftentimes declared. The Elders to whom the discipline of the Church belongeth, let them looke vpon the same. Let parents and teachers of youth direct all their doinges to this ende. This care shoulde euery day stirre bp priuate men also. For whosoever bringeth any thing to the spirituall building bp of this Church, and shall builde but one man as a liuely stone vpon Christ, which is the foundation, surely he deserueth more prayse than they which with great costes builde Churches of Marble.

1. Cor. 3.

2. Cor. 10.

How the gods
lye bled the
rest wherein
they liued.

Last of all is declared, how the faithfull bled this peace and tranquility. They walked (sayth he) in the feare of the Lorde, and were filled with the comfort of the holy ghost. He attributeth to them feare of the Lorde, whereby he vnderstandeth all things belonging to true religion, the knowledge of god, sincere faith, loue of God, fulfilling of his word, and faithfull obedience vnto him. For how shal he feare god, which knoweth him not: how shall y^e knowledge of God lacke fayth: and how shall fayth want the loue of God: And where these things be, there must nedes be the loue of the word, and obedience to the same. He sayth also that they were fylled wyth the comfort of the holy ghost. By this we may vnderstande both the preaching of the Gospell, and the inwarde suggestion of the spirite, which Christ promiseth to those that be his. Surely both these, marueylously comfort the mindes and afflicted consciences of men, in that they teache vs, that God is made at one with vs, and reconcyled to vs, through the merite of Christ, and in the middle of the broyle of afflictions, besprinkle vs with the promises of Gods helpe, as with the most wholesome water of a liuely fountaine. And in these thinges, Luke sayeth the primitive Church sought the recreation of their

Iohn. 14. 16

mindes,

myndes, their ioyes and delightes. Whereby we gather what their exercises ought to be, which are at rest and peace. Therefore execrable is the wickednesse and ingratitude of such, which abuse quietnesse and peace, to the license of the flesh; and in the meane season will neither by helpe, counsaile, nor at least by comfort, ease them whome they see many wayes afflicted for the testimonie of Iesus Christ. This sune, as it is heynous, so it is to common in these dayes, whereby it cometh to passe, that as we abuse peace, so we be easily offended and utterly dismayde at euery light affliction.

Peter traueys
leth from
Church to
Church.

These things being thus premised, he passeth to Peters actes or doings, out of which he picketh two myracles, done orderly one after the other: the one done at Lidda, the other at Ioppe. The occasion of these myracles is said to be Peters traueyling from Church to Church, according to his Apostolike office, not for that he usurped vpon them as a Lorde and ruler, but as to succour where neede was, such as were heauy laden and in distresse, to confirme the weake, to pull by errors where any were growen, and to bestow benefites vpon all men. For that these were the duties of the Apostles, it appeareth by many other places, and the very name of an Apostle teacheth the same, which forbiddeth them to haue anye certaine or fixed sea or dwelling place, we reade euerywhere that Paule afterwarde obserued the same trade, and confirmed Churches in euery place. He sayth that he toke care for all Churches. Therefore the Bishops of Rome go about foolishly and ridiculously to defende their supremacie by this place. For first they attribute to Peter onely, that which it is euident was also commaunded to the other Apostles. Next, they impudently chalenge to themselves, the office of Peter, being altogether vnlike Peter. Besides this, while they catch vnto themselves the cure ouer all Churches, they discharge not the dutie belonging to a faithfull Apostle and shephearde ouer one Church. We are furthermoze taught, that the Churches haue then most neede of faithfull ouersers, when all things seme to be at peace and in safetie. For as through ydlenesse and ease, men easily fall into licentiousnesse of the flesh: so being at ease, in peace and quietnesse, they be most in daunger of the snares of the deuill, as Christ hath taught vs.

2. Cor. 11.

Math. 12.

The myracle
of Aeneas
healed of the
palsie.

But by this meanes it came to passe that Peter came to the Saints (that is, to the faithfull sanctified by the merite of Christ) which dwelt at Lidda, where he restored one Aeneas a man sicke of the palsie, and which had lyne bedrid the space of eyght yeares together, to his health agayne in the name of Iesus Christ. In this myracle the circumstances of persons are diligently to be considered. And in Aeneas certaine things be reported which make for the setting forth of the myracle. For he was sicke of the palsie, which as it is hardly cured euen at the beginning, so being let long to run, it becommeth incurable. The same is a figure of the corruption of manne. For sinne hath brought vs all to be weake, so that being bereaued of the strength of our first state at the beginning, wee bee not able to thinke well. And this sicknesse coulde be cured by no mannes arte or counsaile, which being deriued from our first father into vs, is conceiued and bozne with vs, and groweth with vs, as Dauid testifieth of himselfe. Psal. 51. Wherefore except we be borne agayne from aboue, there is no helpe for vs in anye other thing. And this Peter plainly teacheth vs in this place, whereas being moued by the holy ghost, he cometh to him, and wryth great boldenesse sayth:

2. Cor. 3.

Iohn. 3.

Am. 1.

Aeneas?

Aeneas? The Lord Iesus Christ make thee whole. Arise and make thy bedde. For he so speaketh these wordes, that he manifestly confesseth all the effect and prayse of the myracle is due vnto Christ onely, and that to himselfe belongeth only but the ministerie thereof. And that the Apostles euerywhere did on this wise, is declared before in the restitution of the man that was lame and hault in the third Chapter. The saythfull that were at Lydda acknowledged the same, who perceiuing that Aeneas was made whole, by the name of Iesus Christ, by and by were conuerted vnto the Lorde Iesus. And this is the vse of all myracles, to beare witnessse of the Apostles doctrine, and to bring men vnto Iesus Christ, by whose power they are done. They are therfore pituish and foolish, that so set forth the myracles wrought by the ministerie of the Saintes, that they teach the people to runne vnto them, & worship them. But it is plaine, that they be false miracles which are done to that ende, to establishe the worship of any creature, and to call men from God the creator of all things. Here might many things more be sayd. But bicause the same matter is intreated otherwheres, and falleth out oftner to be intreated of, we will of purpose now be brieue. Let it be sufficient to be hereof admonished, that Iesus Christ is the onely Phisition both of bodye and soule, and the most saythfull defender and protector of hys Church, who onely is able to preserue hir amidde the floudes of persecution, and sodeinly to graunt hir rest in hir affliction: To him be prayse, honor, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The. lxxix. Homelie.

THERE was at Ioppa, a certaine woman a Disciple named Tabitha, (which by interpretation is called Dorcas) the same was full of good workes and almes deedes, which she did. And it came to passe in those dayes that she was sicke and dyed. Whom when they had washed, they layd hir in a Chamber. But forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Ioppa, and the Disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent vnto him desiring him that he would not be grieved to come vnto them. Peter arose, and came with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the chamber, and all the wydowes stode rounde about him, weeping and shewing the coates and garmentes which Dorcas made whyle she was with them. And Peter put them all foorth, and kneeled downe and prayde, and turned him to the body and sayde, Tabitha? arise. And she opened hir eyes, and when she sawe Peter, she sate vp. And he gaue hir the hande and lift hir vp. And when hee had called the Saintes and widdowes, he shewed hir alyue. And it was knowne thorowe all Ioppa, and many beleued on the Lord. And it came to passe that he taryed many dayes at Ioppa with one Simon a Tanner.



As the sonne of God our Sauour Iesus Christ sent his Disciples to preach the Gospell: so he furnished them with myracles, whereby to purchase a credite to their doctrine, and to declare the force or fruite of the merite of Iesus Christ. To this ende must those two myracles principally be referred, which Luke reporteth were done by the ministerie of Peter, in the ende of the

Chapter.

Chapter. The first is the restitution of Aeneas, who laye bedzed eyght yeares of the Palsie, but by calling on the name of Christ, was healed. Whereby we are taught that the strength of our decayed nature is restored by Christ our Phisition, and that we which are not able otherwysse to thynke a good thought, are able in him, to doe all things. To this is ioyned another myracle, which as it is in deede greater, and moze wonderfull: so it moze comforteth vs. For Peter rayseth Thabita or Dorcas which was deade, to life agayne, thereby declaring that Iesus Christ is Lorde also ouer death, and therefore that they ought not to feare death, which throughe fayth be grafted in him. The consideration hereof shall be very profitable, if in order we marke the persons, of whome Luke here intreateth.

He beginneth the description of the myracle with hir, on whome the myracle was shewed. And although it seeme to be a matter of no great importance, by what name she was called, yet he thought good to make mention thereof, for the moze troth of the storie. He sayeth that she was called Thabita in the Assirian tongue, Dorcas in the Graeke tongue, which worde in the Latine tongue, is as much to saye, as a Kydde. But it is moze behoofefull to consider the things reported of hir.

The first is the profession of fayth and religion, because he writeth shee was a Disciple, that is to saye, a Christian. For they that beleued, in the primitive Church, were called Disciples, vntill at Antioche they were called Christians, as we shall afterwarde perceyue in the eleuenth Chapter. And this name was not without a mysterie. For it did admonishe vs, that Christ is our teacher, and declared that christianitie consisted not in the bare profession of the name, but rather in doctrine and preceptes, and in the diligent obseruation of the same. Wherevnto Paule saimeth to haue had respect, where he appointeth obedience to be the ende of preaching the Gospel, and of all Apostolicall ministerie. As therefore by the consideration of this name, we are taught that the profession of a Christian name, is in bayne and vnprofitable, vnlesse we faythfully obey Christ, whome we haue professed: so we are also taught, that the first steppes or graesse of our saluation is to be y Disciples of Christ. For he is the foundation of all doctrine, as well of the Prophetes as the Apostles, vppon whome as many as will be saued, must be builded. Which is the cause that this thinge is first placed in the commendation of Dorcas. This reproueth the superstition of all them which ascribing to them selfe a tytle of godlynesse and religion, forsake the name of Christ whome they professed in their baptisme, and chosse rather to be called the Disciples of men. Whose vanitie long since hath bene grievously reprehended and confuted by the Apostle.

Furthermore, he sayth she was full of good workes. And that it myght appeare what workes he ment, by exposition he calleth them almes deedes. This worde comprehendeth all the workes of mercie and charitie, whereby our neyghbour is relieved, whyle eyther the hungry is fedde, the thirly haue drinke, the naked is clothed, the captiue redeemed, the sicke visited, or else whensoever any afflicted is by our counsell or comfort holpen and refreshed. For this worde almes in the Graeke, taketh hys name of mercye. And least any man might thinke there was in hir but some bayne affectation only, he sayth, shee did almes deedes or mercy. This example teacheth vs that fayth which maketh vs the Disciples of Christ, is not ydle, nor con-

i. The description of Thabita.

i. A Disciple.

2. Cor. 10.
Rom. 14.6.

Ephes. 2.
1. Cor. 3.

1. Cor. 1.3.

ii. Full of good workes.

listeth not in the Auggyst and slothfull contemplation of heavenly thinges.
 For where it possesseth the mynde, which is the chiefe part of man, and tru-
 ly belongeth from the heart, it cannot be, but that it must drawe man who-
 ly to the obedience of God, and bring forth much fruite. Therefore Jesus
 Christ saith: He that abideth in me and I in him, he bringeth forth much fruite.
 And Iames the Apostle exacteth chiefly of the vaine vaunters of fayth,
 that they will by their woorkes declare that fayth which is so much in their
 mouth. Therefore we may worthily complaine that we haue much iniurie
 done vnto vs, when they that glory in the merites of their owne righteou-
 nesse, saye we be the enemies of good woorkes, seeing we confesse that it is
 no fayth, except it shewe it selfe by woorkes, and that none can doe good
 woorkes, except he be ioyned vnto Christ by fayth. For he sayeth: As the
 braunch cannot beare fruite of it selfe, except it abyde in the Vyne, no more can
 ye, except you abyde in me. Agayne, this example teacheth vs, whych be in
 dede good woorkes. For we haue hearde she was a Disciple of Christ, and
 nowe the woorkes of charitie are attributed vnto hir. Therefore they be
 good woorkes, which the Christians doe through fayth, according to the rule
 of charitie. For where of our selues we be not able to thinke well, whatsoe-
 uer we doe without fayth, it must needes be sinne, as Paule sayth, Rom. 14.
 Furthermore, it cannot be called good, that serueth for the commoditie of
 none, bicause god himselfe is for this cause called good, for that he most libe-
 rally poureth his treasures of grace vpo all his creatures. Therefore Christ
 hath taught vs that the lawe is fulfilled by loue or charitie, and in the Pro-
 phetes he euerywhere exacteth loue of them, which puffed bp in confidence
 of the ceremonies of the lawe, thought that men were saued by the obser-
 uing thereof. Yea, he teacheth vs that charitie or loue is the cognizaunce
 whereby his people and seruantes may be knowne, and he sayth that in the
 day of iudgement he will haue most respect her vnto. By this place are con-
 futed all those things that men sayne of their owne heads, whyles they at-
 tribute saluation to most trifling ceremonies boyde of faith and charitie,
 the obseruing whereof all the Scripture with one consent sayth, is altogi-
 ther vnprofitable. See Esay. 29. Math. 15. Colos. 2. &c.
 It followeth in the description of Dorcas, that she fell deadly sicke and
 dyed, what time, as God woulde, Peter the Apostle shoulde be at Lydda.
 Howbeit god could easily haue provided she should neither haue fallen sick,
 nor yet haue died, forasmuch as it appereth he prolonged the daies of Eze-
 chias, and that Christ healed many of mortall diseases. But he suffreth hir
 being overcome of the sorowes of sicknesse, to die. Wherevpon we ga-
 ther that the elect are not free from common calamities, wherewith man-
 kinde vseth to be afflicted. For both they are punished with sicknesse, suf-
 fer penurie and hunger, feele the smarte of banishment, and haue experi-
 ence of whatsoeuer other aduersities. But as Paule testifieth, all thinges
 worke to their commoditie. For so through them is Gods glorie declared,
 and their fayth exercised and tried, and alwayes there appeare in them e-
 uident arguments of Gods goodnesse. This thing the example of the blind
 man teacheth vs, who, Christ sayeth was borne blinde, to the ende the
 woorkes of God might be shewed in him. And when he hearde that Lazarus
 was sicke, he sayde: This infirmitie is not vnto death, but for the glorye of
 God, that the sonne of God may be glorified by it. And the ioyfull and prospe-

Iohn. 15.

Iacob. 2.

Iohn. 15.

Esay. 58.

Hoseas. 6.

Iohn. 13.

Math. 25.

iii. She sick-
ness & dieth.

Roma. 8.

Iohn 9.

Iohn. 11.

rous successe of the matter declareth that the example of Dorcas ought to be referred to the same ende. For both she is restored vnto lyfe, and by hir meanes many are wonne vnto Christ. These things teach vs that we neither shoulde be offended at the aduersities falling out vnto vs, nor that we shoulde ouer hastily giue iudgement of them, who fall into aduersity and miserie. For many times they be the excellent vessels of Gods mercye and grace, which by reason of continuall aduersitie, seeme in the iudgement of the worlde to be the vessels of wrath.

Moreouer, he addeth vnto the thinges spoken of Dorcas, what they of hir household and certaine widdowes of Ioppa did, when she was deade. And first he sayth they washed hir body, and layde it in a chamber. For cor- ses in olde time vsed to be washed, both bicause of the hope of resurrection, & also for that they knew, that those which after this life shoulde appere before the iudgement seat of god, shoulde neede to be purified. Hereby was prefigu- red the purification which is giuen vs in the blood of Christ. The same was also the meaning of the spices & ointments, wherewith the dead bodies were dressed before they were buried. And these ceremonies might be suffred for a while in the primitive Church, vntill they were become so perfite, to re- nounce them altogether. In the meane season we are taught, that Christi- an people shoulde deale decently with their corpes. For although there ought to be no mourning after the maner of the Heathen, amonge them which knowe there shall be a resurrection (1. Thes. 4.) nor no neede of Jew- ishe ceremonies, bicause all things belonging to our saluation, are abun- dantly fulfilled in Christ: yet a diligent consideration must be had both of honestie and godlynesse, which both the law of charitie and Christian religi- on commaundeth vs to obserue, by reason that our bodies be the Temples of the holy ghost. Why therfore shoulde those bodies vngently be reiected, which the spirite of Christ, not long before, did bouchsafe to dwell in? Sure- ly the Prophete doth chiefly rebpayde the Moabites, for that they forget- ting all humnitye, burned the bones of the king of the Edomites. There- fore their offence is grievous in these dayes, which lyke brute beastes vse crueltie agaynst the deade, and vnnaturly throve and cast their carcasses rounde about.

But they yet vse one other courtesie. For they send messengers for Peter, whome they hearde was at Lydda, and was so famous a man by reason of his myracles, which was no small deede of faith and charity. For they hope that the Minister of Christ was able to restore hir to lyfe agayne, and that they greatly desired, bicause they knewe the Church of Christ, had neede as yet of such a member. This is also the propertie of fayth, that despaireth not, no not in death, bicause it knoweth that Christ hath overcome death, and who once embrace fayth with sincere affection of loue, them she casteth not of, no not after death. Here also appeareth a singular rewarde of chri- stian godlynesse & liberalitie. For where Dorcas while she lyued, was much giuen herevnto, there wanted not that faythfully cared for hir, when she was deade. Thus God bleth to preserue the memorie of those that be his. And oftentimes it cometh to passe, that they which seemed to be hated of all men, bicause of their godlynesse: after they are deade, they finde many defenders of their good name, whereof we haue example in our heade, Je- sus Christ. For after he was put vnto the shamefull death of the crosse,

Ioseph

2. What they did with Dorcas when she was dead. They walsh hir corpes.

Amos.2.

They sende for Peter.

Psal. 34.

They shewe
the garments
that she madeThe reliques
of the deade.
Apoc. 14.

Marc. 14.

Iacob. 5.

3. How Peter
rayseth vp
Dorcas.2. Reg. 4.
Math. 9.

Ioseph and Nichodemus, which before that, were but secret Disciples, buried him honorably. Let no man therefore shunne to suffer shamefull death for Christes sake, since that God so faythfully preserveth the remembrance of those that be his.

Ouer and beside all this, they declare in the presence of Peter, the griefe they had conceived by his death through weeping, and they shewe vnto the Apostle the garments, which she caused to be made for the poore, whyle she liued. Where beside the dutie of charitie, wherof we haue spoken, may be seene what be the true reliques of the Saintes, and faythfull of Christ, which the godly ought both openly to shewe, and to worship and kisse, that is to saye, the workes of their charitie, and steppes of their life. Of these it is sayd, that they follow the deade, and remayne when they be rotten. These things Christ commended in Marie, and bicause of that last annoynting of him, that she bestowed vpon him, he promised the remembraunce thereof shoulde alwayes remayne in his Church. The Ecclesiasticall hystories shewe vs euerywhere such Reliques as these. These it becommieth vs of dutie to prayse, and by diligent imitation of them, to worship. But to worship their bones, after a superstitious sort, we are commaunded by no testimonie, or example of Scripture. Moreover, as it is a great prayse of the godly, to leaue behinde them for posteritie, examples and presidentes of charitie, so is it a dishonest and shamefull thing to leaue after them, when they are gone, the tokens of couetousnesse, lecherie, vnrighteousnesse, and intemperancie. Such as are hordes and heapes of treasure, and whatsoeuer instruments else of wickednesse are thereby gotten, which the Apostle sayth shall be hereafter, the testimonie of iust condemnation. O wretched state shall theirs be, the memorie wherof, widdowes and fatherlesse children by reason of their goodes taken from them, shall testifie with weeping teares. But more wretched shall they be, who as though they had committed small offence in their lyfe time, hange ouer their Sepulchres, swordes and shieldes, and stande in complete harnesse, that the remembrance of their lyfe ledde in robberie and murthering, maye remayne the longer. O harde heart which the remembraunce of bitter death is not able to mollifie.

But let vs see at length what Peter did, being sent for of them. It is sayd that he straightwaies went with them that were sent vnto him. Which is a great argument of readinesse and zeale in promoting the kingdome of Christ. Wherby we may easily gather with what spirite they are ledde that shew themselves daungerous in going about the things which serue to the setting forth of Christes glory, and the saluation of others. Further, when he came to Ioppa, and was brought into the chamber where the corps was layde, not much regarding the weeping of the Widdowes, bicause by instinct of the holy ghost working in him, he mynded another matter, he put them all out of the Chamber, falleth on his knees, and turneth him vnto feruent prayer. The holy Apostle truly followeth olde presidentes and examples, forasmuch as it appeareth that Elizaus the Prophete, and Iesus Christ vsed the lyke trade in raysing vp of the deade. For as prayers require a certaine going aside and solitarinesse: so it seemeth to be a point of modestie, that he woulde not shewe a thing of such importaunce among so many, to seeke prayse thereby, but woulde doe it by himselfe alone. And

whyle

whyle he maketh such earnest prayer, he evidently declareth that all the successe and prayse of the myracle ought to be referred to Christ, as vnto God, wherof hath bene already manye times entreated. When he had done his prayers, he speaketh vnto the deade, and biddeth hir aryse. Which might seme a ridiculous thing, if Christ had not done the lyke when hee raysted vp Iairus daughter and Lazarus. Such sayinges as these, are the Preambles of that terrible and lowde voyce, whereby at the later daye all the deade shall be raysted vp, as Christ himselfe teacheth, Iohn. 5. Yea, this is an infallible argument of the resurrection that shall be, that at the voyce of a manne pronounced by the spirite and name of Christ, we reade howe the deade are raysted agayne. For the effect of the matter declareth, that Peters speaking was not in hayne. For forthwith Dorcas opened hir eyes and looked on Peter, then she sitteth vpp, last of all, Peter reacheth hir vp by the hande, and sheweth hir alyue to all them that were called in. By the which myracle is proued, that the doctrine that Peter taught was a lyuely doctrine, and that Iesus Christ the author therof, was Lord both of lyfe and death. And the elect acknowledged the same, which streight waye when they had sene the myracle, belæued in the Lord.

Vnto this narration Luke addeth a fewe other thinges which serue for a preparation to that that foloweth. For he sayth that Peter remained at Ioppe certaine dayes in the house of one Simon a Tanner, in whose house he was admonished by a vision from heauen, to call the Gentiles into the Communion of the church, and was sent for by Cornelius the Centurion, as shall be shewed in the Chapter folowing. Here let vs obserue, of what maner of people, the Primitive Church was collected, seeing Peter had none other hoste, but such an one, as got his living by an handycraft, and that not one of the fynest. Hereof Paule teacheth vs, that we shoulde reioyce in the Lord alone. Furthermore, the modestie of Peter is declared, who disdayned not such an harbour, where as now adayes kinges palaces, are scarce able to receyue his counterseyt successor. Let vs followe the modestie of the Apostle,

and therein belæue and serue Iesus Christ: to whome
be prayse, honoz, power, and glory,
for euer. Amen.



Peter lodgeth
at Simon the
Tanners.

1. Cor. 1.

The

The tenth chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The.lxx.Homelic.

THERE was a certaine man in Cæsarea called Cornelius, a Captaine of the souldiers of Italy, a deuout man, and one that feared God wyth all his houshold, which gaue much almes to the people, and was alwayes in prayers vnto God. The same sawe by a vision euidently (about the ix. houre of the day) an Angell of God comming in to him, and saying to him Cornelius? When he looked on him, hee was afrayde, and sayde, what is it Lorde? He sayde vnto him: Thy prayers and thy almeses are come vp in to remembrance before God. And nowe sende men to Ioppa, and call for one Simon whose surname is Peter. Hee lodgeth with one Simon a Tanner, whose house is by the sea side. He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to doe.



Hitherto the first part of this storie hath bene declared, wherein hath bene shewed howe the Apostles according to the commaundement of Christ, preached the wholesome worde of the Gospell euerywhere to the Jewes. And a great many beloued, and Luke declareth a marueylous increase of Christian faith in the Church. Yet the greater part and specially those that were of most authoritie withstode the truth. For both they layde handes on the Apostles, and stoned Steuen, and made hauocke of the

whole Church at Ierusalem, by horrible persecution, and sent Saule with publike commaundements, as farre as Damascus, to oppresse the growth of Christes Church, being euen in the blade as we commonly vse to saye. And it is not onelyke but manye others did as it is here written Saule did. Therefore the incurable and stubbozne contempt of so wholesome a doctrine, deserued that at length the kingdome of God shoulde be taken from the Jewes, and brought to the Gentiles, as Christ prophesied should come to passe. Now this thing beganne to be put in effect, Luke rehearseth in this Chapter, and declareth the storie of Cornelius, which we maye aptly name the first frutes of the Gentiles that were called, seeing he was chosen of God, to be the beginning of so weightie a matter. Aboue all thinges, the principall vse of this hystorie must be obserued, which consisteth herein: howe God vseth to cast of the vnthankfull and wicked enemies of the Gospell,

Math. 21.

The calling
of the Gen-
tiles.

pell, by his iust iudgement, and is not so bounde to any Nation, that he is compelled to beare with it, if it be vnworthy. Hereunto is to be added another thing, that is to saye, howe the saluation containned in Christ, belongeth not to the Jewes onely, but also to the Gentyles. Which as it is no small comfort to vs which come of the Gentyles: so, it behooveth that we stande allwaye in feare, bicause the Jewes were cast of and forsaken, least we by like vnthankfulnesse and disobedience, deserue also to be refused. For Paulus saying shall alwayes stande in his full strength and force, If God spare not the naturall braunches, take heede least it come to passe, that he spare not thee also. And this is the sentence of Christ long agoone pronounced, that euery braunch that bringeth not forth fruit, shall be hewen downe and cast into the fire. But bicause the vocation & adoption of the vncircumcised Gentiles, seemed to the Jewes a folye and an absurde thing (for that they onely so many yeares together, were thought worthy of that name and tytle, and therefore abhorred all other Nations, as we doe the Turkes and them at this day:) first God would haue the vocation of the Gentyles to be preached by the Prophetes, whereof we may see singuler testimonies in them, Psal. 2. and. 27. Esay. 2. and. 19. Agayne, 42. and. 49. Zach. 9. &c. Then declareth he a notable beginning hereof in Cornelius, whome he so called, that any man might see therein the counsell and deuyse of Gods providence. For he doth vouchsafe to sende his Angell from heauen to Cornelius, and instructeth Peter by an heauenly vision, whereby he declareth that he will haue the Gentyles called into his Church, as we shall see when we come to the place. At this tyme we haue to consider what God did vouchsafe to doe by Cornelius.

For Luke beginneth with the description of Cornelius, which he knitteth by in marueylous breuitie and playnnesse. first declaring his state and kynde of lyfe, he sayth he was a Captayne of the Italian Souldiers. For the Romaines vsed to entertayne diuers bandes of men, of diuers Nations, according to the which they gaue them their names. And bicause among all nations, they esteemed none more than the Italians, the Italian garrisons were preferred aboue others. And there is no doubt but that Cornelius was an Italian, forasmuch as he was one of the chiefe of that bande. But bicause he dwelt at Casarea, which the auncient wyters call Turris Stratonis, the tower or castell of Straton, the maner or state of the souldiers in those dayes must be considered, that we maye the easiler vnderstande the state of Cornelius. Thus wyte the Romaine Hystoriographers. After the victories that Pompey (called y great) had gotten, who was the first that subdued Syria and Iurie vnto the Romaine Empire, the people of Rome had no more grieuous enemies, than the Parthians, who were greatly encouraged with the death of Crassus, & with the ouerthrowe of the Romaine Legions, and number of ensignes and standerdes which they had taken, wherein were the pictures of splayed Eagles paynted. Wyth whose incursions and roades, bicause they were continually molested, they thought good to place in the Cities bordering vpon them, certayne garrisons of souldiers, which within a short warning being mustred, myght make a complete armie, if nede so required, whereby to repulse and beate backe the enimie. And those souldiers also were a defence and safegarde for the Cities of Iurie, to tame and keepe vnder the courage of the Jewes,

Rom. 11.

Iohn. 15.

1. The description of
Cornelius.
A Captayne.

Ann. 1.

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which were very prone and ready to make tumults and insurrection. Hence cometh it, that we heare so often mention made of the Captaynes and souldiers in the writings of the Euangelists, whereof diuers dwelled and kept house in Iurie, and wandered not from place to place, as the solde or hyred Nation of Caria did. And it pleased God of this kinde of men, to gather together the first frutes of the Gentyles in the Church of Christ, that his grace and goodnesse might appeare the greater, seeing it is euident, that in the lyfe of souldiers there is great licentiousnesse, much corruption of maners, and all kynde of brutynesse. In the meane season, of the things which we haue spoken of the souldiers of those dayes, maye be gathered what the state of that people is, which sometime were free, and after that, through ingratitude and disobedience, lost their priuledge of freedome. For it is manifest, that the Jewes whom God brought out of Egypt, and set at libertie, were such people as obeyed their owne lawfull Magistrates, being subiect vnder no forreine Princes power. But by abusing of this benefite, they lost both their libertie and goodes for the most part. So that now they are not onely in subiection to the commaundement and couetousnesse of the Romaine Presidents, but haue in euery of their Cities, garrisons of foren souldiers, among whome, though there were some to be commended for their equitie and godlynesse, yet many examples teache vs that the most part of them were souldierlike, that is to saye, fierce and presumptuous. Yea, God in time past threatened such infelicitie to the disobedient. Therefore let as many as enioye the benefite of freedome in these dayes, learne by example of the Jewes, to obey their lawfull Magistrates, and their wholesome lawes, least hereafter they taste of the lyke tyrannie and bondage.

Deuout and
fearing
God.

In his Epist
logic, cap. 5.

But let vs returne to Cornelius, whose conuersation and maners are marueylously commended. For Luke attributeth to him deuotion and feare of God. Whereby it appeareth he was free from that ydolatrie of the Gentyles, which wickedly and foolishly worshipped many Gods. And this shall appeare to haue bene a great and singuler enterpryse, if we consider the state of those times, when all Nations were vnder the rule of the Romaines, by whose lawes it was enacted, that no man shoulde professe any strange religion. For as Tereullian writeth, none might be worshipped as a God, but such as the Senate woulde allowe as Gods, in so much that they refused to take Christ for a God, because Tiberius had moued the Senate to haue him so taken, with the prerogatyue of his suffrage and voyce. Therefore it must needs procede of great constancie of minde in Cornelius that he durst being an Officer, and therefore knowing he coulde not go vnspoyde, refuse the Goddes of the Gentyles, and worship the true God. By this example are the men of these dayes confuted, which in matters of religion, thinke inferiour Officers must attempt nothing, without the consent of the highest Magistrate, but that men must simply obey y higher powers. But as we denie not but whatsoeuer duties belong to the Emperours and Kings, we must performe and fulfill them: so, we keepe and appoynt our religion for God onely, and affirme that religion must not be violated or broken for any Princes pleasure. And we knowe that Daniel and his fellowes long sithence, thought as we doe, which chose rather to be cast into an hote fornaice, and into a caue of Lyons, than to violate or breake Gods true religion.

ligion. And this is the greatest commendation of Cornelius, that he openly worshipped the true God, not taryng for the Princes lawe to establish the same. Yea, and Christ commended the fayth of the Centurion, which plainly confessed he was vnder the commaundement of another, by a singuler testimony and also myracle.

Luke 7.

The exercises of true godlynesse.

i. The instructing of the familie or household.

Gene. 18.

1. Sam. 2. 3.

1. Reg. 10. 11.

q. Almshouses.

Luke 3.

1. Cor. 3.

iiij. Continual prayers.

A comparison betwene Cornelius and the souldiers of our dayes.

But where the Euangelist attributeth to Cornelius praise of deuotion and feare of God, he declareth also his outward exercises, wherby he vttered and declared his religious minde. Amonge which, this is the first, where hee sayth, he feared not God himselfe onely, but that his familie also was well instructed in true deuotion and feare of God. For this is the propertie of the godly, that as their selues be giuen vnto God, so wythe they them also to be which belong vnto them. For why shoulde they suffer them to straye from God, whome they knowe, he hath committed to their charge? Surely Abraham is commended, because he was both godly himselfe, and did teach his familie the true worship and religion of God. And because there be commaundementes of God to that ende and purpose, (as is to be seene Deuter. 6. and Psal. 78.) the vngodlynesse of the household is worthily imputed to the household, if through his negligence they were vngodly. The Scripture setteth out to vs a notable example hereof in Heli. And the Quene of Saba prayseth Salomon because of his well ordered Countries, but afterwarde he is blamed for the vngodlynesse of his wiues. As manye therefore as will be praysed for religion, let them not thinke they haue done their dutie, if their selues be worshippers of God, but let them labour to bring all those they haue charge of, vnto God likewise.

Moreouer, Cornelius did almesse, that is to saye, exercised the workes of mercy. Whereby it appeareth that religion had taken such roote in hys hart, that being enflamed therewith, he shewed all kinde of dutie vnto men also. And it is lyke he was not ignorant of that rule, which the Baptist had giuen vnto the souldiours, which came to aske hym counsell, saying: Hurt no manne, neyther trouble any man wrongfully, and bee contented with your payes or wages. But as though he had done but little in performing hereof, he thinketh it his dutie, to relieue other mens necessities also. And truly he that feeleth not hys minde as yet so affected, let him cease to glory in religion, because Paule counteth the things of greatest importance, as vnprofitable, if we be voide of charitie. Vnto these, as a thyrde thing, is added continuance in prayer, which I iudge was stirred vp in him, of a desire that he had to knowe the truth. For me thinketh he is to be counted in the number of those, which hauing long agoone attayned to the true knowledge of God, thinke it is true that God had promysed a Sauour, but were ignorant who it was. Him therefore he desired to haue reuealed vnto him, least it shoulde come to passe that following his owne reason, he might erre in the way of saluation. This sense may be gathered afterwarde of the wordes of the Angell, which saith that Peter shoulde shewe him what he had to doe.

Let vs compare the Souldiers of our dayes with this Captaine, which vse to defende themselves as well by his example, as by others of his calling, and it shall easily appeare, how little these examples serue them. Cornelius is commended for his deuotion. But these men thinke, deuotion belongeth not vnto souldiers, but vnto religious men. Cornelius feareth God with all his household, but these men thinke those mindes most souldierlike,

Ann. ij.

that

that haue least feare both of God and man. Cornelius (sayeth Luke) holpe and relieued the poore with almesse, but these men lyue by stealth, refrayning neyther prophane nor Church goddes. Cornelius was continuallye in prayers, and desired to haue the knowledge of the promised Saviour reuealed to him, but these mennes tongues bled to swearing, cursing, and blasphemie, with wicked audacitie, pollute the crosse of our saviour Christ, his passion, his woundes, and whatsoeuer else. I speake not now howe Cornelius warred vnder his labofull Magistrate, to keepe out forren force of the enimie, to suppress sedition, and maintayne publike tranquillitie: but our souldiers lyke the people of Caria, hyred for mony, entermedle, and busy themselves in warres pertayning nothing to them, and hate the name of peace, worse than the deuil. But what speake I of souldiers, seeing they are not to be compared with Cornelius, which thinke themselves nowe a dayes the perfittest men in Christendome: So deade is deuotion in the mindes of men: so great is the desire of priuate lucre in all sortes of men. And all mennes mindes almost, are so colde in prayers vnto God, that though aduersitie on euery side vrges them, they cannot shake of this carelesnesse.

2. The calling of Cornelius.

Hebrues, 1.

Nowe, after the description of Cornelius, followeth his vocation, the beginning wherof proceedeth of the Angels apparition, where appeareth a great token of Gods goodnesse. For God might haue thought vs unworthy the seruice of the most basest Creature. But not contented to haue appointed all other thinges to serue our vse, he sendeth out his Angels also, (as Paule teacheth) for the mynisterie of those that be his. And such is the maner of this apparition, that it is voyde of al suspition of craft or subtiltie. For in the clere light, about the .ix. houre of the daye, doth the Angell come in vnto him, in a visibill fourme, (yet representing some more maiestie, than is in man) and calleth Cornelius by his propre name, thereby to make him the more attent to receiue the commaundements of God. For God bleseth so plainely to deale with vs, that we neede suspect no guyle, such, as commonly bleseth to be in apparitions of Devils, which are alwayes darke and doubtful. And yet notwithstanding Cornelius his great and seruent study of religion, he is abashed, at the sight of the angell. Which thing as it may be attributed to the infirmitie of man, so is it the property of the godly, to be afraid at the presence of godly maiestie. For this, we reade came to passe vnto Daniel, and afterward to Christes thre Disciples in the mount of Thabor. And we ought thus reuerently to be affected towardes the worde of God, forasmuch as God no way so much sheweth him self present vnto vs. Therefore let vs with Cornelius acknowledge God speaking to vs in his worde, and offer our selues prompt and ready to fulfil his commaundements. The chiefe thing in this businesse is the message of the Angell, which appereth to consist of two partes. Therefore we will speake of eche of them, in their order.

The saying or message of the Angell.

Against the maintainers of merites.

The first part conteyneth a consolation, whereby he chaereth vp Cornelius minde, hauing bene long in perplexitie. For he saith: Thy prayers and thy almeses are come vp into remembraunce before God. Which wordes are not negligently to be passed ouer, because the Papistes abuse them two manner of wayes, while they strue for the glory of mans righteousnesse, against the merite of Christ. For first they hereof gather that men be prepared by their owne power and workes to be afterwarde indged worthy to receiue greater

greater grace and saluation in Christ. Next, they simply and absolutely, attribute the prayse of merite, vnto woorkes, as though we were iustified and saued by them. But the thing it selfe declareth they are deceyued in theim bothe. For touching the first, it is most vaine that they dreame of this place concerning theyr preparations, forasmuch as it sufficiently appereth, that Cornelius had nor did of him selfe none of those things which before was rehearsed of him. For how should one of the Gentyles, borne and brought vp in superstition from his childehode, know & feare the true God, of his owne industrie, considering that the naturall man perceyueth not the thinges belonging vnto the spirite of God? How should he also make his prayers to be acceptable vnto God, without faith, seing that without faith it is impossible to please God? And if he had faith (as it can not be denied) it must needs be that he had it of the gifte of God. And faith is not without the spirite of regeneration, which brought forth in him both the feare of God, the desire to be almesfull, and what soeuer good qualitie els was in him. And we all stande in the case that Cornelius did, and no man is able of him selfe, to make ready him selfe, to receyue the grace of God, forasmuch as we be not able of our selues to thinke well. Furthermoze, it is ridiculous, to attribute the name of meryte vnto woorkes, & to glozy of them, in the iudgement of God. For who is able to say, that he did them of himselfe? And haue we forgotten that saying of Paule, What hast thou, that thou hast not receyued? And if thou hast receiued it, why boastest thou, as though thou haddest not receyued it? Moreouer, we must needs acknowledge whether we will, or nill, that whatsoeuer woorkes come from vs, be imperfite, although we doe them by the grace of God working in vs, according to the appoyntment of Gods worde. For the concurrence of our carnall affections, and wicked lustes and desires infect the same. In so much that the holy men in the Prophete saye: that our righteousnesse is as a ragged cloth arrayed or distayned with a womans disease. To conclude, whereas all things in vs are corrupt, whatsoeuer is in vs, that pleaseth God, it pleaseth him because of our fayth only in Iesus Christ. For in him is he well pleased. Yet we denie not but that the Scripture bleseth many times this worde rewarde. But that rewarde is the gift of Gods grace, who (as Augustine sayeth) crowneth or rewardeth his giftes in vs, who otherwise deserue to be called vnprofitable seruants. Therefore the wordes of the Angell haue a farre other meaning. For his purpose is to teach vs, that God had a consideration of Cornelius doing before this, and that he despised not his prayers, and whatsoeuer other deedes of deuotion else he did. And he calleth to his remembrance the promise of Christ, saying: To euery one that hath shall bee giuen. For they are sayde to haue, which vse to bestowe the gifts giuen them of Gods liberalitie, as maete is. Hereof may be taken a generall comfort, that earnest prayer and denotion is not vnprofitable or in vayne, and out of doubt we shall perceyue great encrease of Gods gifts, if we will lende vnto the Lorde. Apply the Parable of Talents, which is written Math. 25. to this place.

1. Cor. 2.

Heb. 11.

Eph. 2.

2. Cor. 3.

1. Cor. 4.

Esay. 64.

Math. 3. 17.

Luke. 17.

Cornelius is
appoynted to
sende for Pe-
ter.

In the other part he teacheth him what he shoulde doe. The chiefe poynt of the commaundement is, that he should sende for Simon Peter, who shoulde teache and instruct him what to doe. And this is an euident argument of the goodnesse of God, that he putteth Peter rather than Cornelius, to payne, to take the iourney. For thus he vseth to offer vnto vs grace and saluation,

Rom. 10.

saluation, when we seeke not for it, not bicause he woulde fauour the flesh of our fleshe, but for that by his diligence he woulde enflame vs, to the like diligence in seeking for our saluation and his glory. We haue an example hereof in our first parentes, who bicause they woulde not first seeke God, and call vpon him, were sought for and called of him. Furthermore, this place maketh for the setting forth of the outward worde and Ecclesiasticall ministerie. For as befoze, he sent Paule to Ananias: so now he appoynteth Peter to be Cornelius teacher, whome he myght haue instructed by ministerie of the Aungell. For it is euident that none commeth vnto Christ, but such as the father draweth: and sayth is the gift of God, but yet the order of God abideth inuolable, that faith commeth by hearing, and hearing by the worde of God. As many therefore as disdayne to heare the worde of God at the mouth of man, declare thereby that they be vnworthye of the kingdome of God, bicause they contemne his ordinaunce, and desire the order of saluation by him instituted, to be destroyed. Let vs also vse the doctrine of the Apostles, that we being therby instructed, may doe those thinges which be acceptable vnto God, and may obtayne saluation through Iesus Christ our only Sauiour: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The.lxxj. Homelie.

AND when the Aungell which spake vnto him was departed, he called two of his housholde seruantes, and a deuout souldier of them that wayted on him, and tolde them all the matter, and sent them to Ioppa. On the morowe as they went on their iourney, and drewe nigh vnto the citie, Peter went vp vpon the top of the house to praye, about the sixt houre. And when he waxed an hungred, he woulde haue eaten. But whyle they made ready, he fell into a traunce, and sawe heauen opened, and a certayne vessell come downe vnto him, as it had bene a great sheete knit at the fower corners, and was let downe to the earth: wherein were all maner of fowerfooted beasts of the earth, and vermin and wormes, and foules of the ayre. And there came a voyce to him: Ryse Peter, kill and eate. But Peter sayde, not so Lorde. For I haue neuer eaten thing that is common or vncleane. And the voyce spake vnto him.



Rom. 11.

AGOD in electing the people of the Jewes, bled his singuler fauour and goodnesse, the which Moses and the Prophetes euerywhere sette forth: so when he cast them of, and toke the Gentyles into their place, he declared a singuler example of his wrath and iustice: which thing it behoueth vs the more diligently to consider, bicause Paule deduceth a generall doctrine therof, shewing that no man shall escape unpunished, which contemneth the mercie and goodnesse of God, considering that God hath bled so great seueritie in lopping of the naturall braunches. But bicause this seemed to the Jewes a thing vnnæte to be sayde, or to be beleued, insomuch that the Apostles for a good space were not resolved in that poynt, and the Gentyles also had

no little doubt thereof, in consideration of the lyfe which they had led afore tymes, it was therefore requisite, that there shoulde be some notable entrie and beginning hereof. Therefore is Cornelius the Centurion chosen, even from among the number and vocation of warriors, that the mercy of God might appeare the more plaine and manifest. He is aduertised by an Angel sent from heauen, to call Peter vnto him: by the which argument onely, it did evidently appeare, that all thinges in this businesse came to passe by Gods working. Yet shall the same appeare in the things following more fully and evidently, and for the declaration hereof, this present place maketh not a little, which sheweth the faythfull obedience of Cornelius being thus admonished by the Angel, and also teacheth vs how Peter was aduertised by a vision from heauen, that he should not refuse to go preach the Gospel to Cornelius.

Luke is verie diligent in describing of Cornelius obedience, because it giueth vs an euident testimonie of his fayth, which shall appeare the more playne and manifest, if we expende, howe many impediments there were, to haue kept him from beleauing and obeying the Angels words. It was a daungerous matter for him to chaunge religion, whose dutie it was chiefly to see that no tumults or businesse shoulde be made in Syria, through the chaunge or alteration of any thing. And there was no helpe or ayde for him in man, wherby he myght hope to defende himselfe agaynst the power of the Emperour of Rome. Moreouer, it was to be suspected, that in a Tanners house there shoulde be any which coulde teach a man the waye to lyfe and saluation. For who would looke for such a teacher out of such a schoule? Who would not also suspect him, that (as it were) laye lurking in such an obscure corner? But fayth onely overcommeth all these things, which to obey, Cornelius had long before submitted himselfe. And this example may worthily be ioyned to those which Paule repeateth Heb. 11. We are taught, that we must not for any daungers be feared, or drawen from the doctrine of truth, nor suspect the fayth any maner of way, for any slender or base appearance outwardly, but let vs followe Cornelius, and without all delaye fulfill the commaundements of God. For he by and by called vnto him two of his seruants, and a deuout souldier, and sendeth them to Ioppa to bring Peter vnto him. Where appeareth a singuler commoditie whych Cornelius had by the godly ordering of his familie. For now he hath he faythfull seruants, to whome he may safely commit a businesse of such credit and importance. An example whereof, Moses sheweth vs in Abraham and his seruants. But their case is farre otherwise, which so neglect their familie, as though their instruction appertayned nothing vnto them. For where they will not bring them bp in their dutie to God, they be for the most part vntrustie and vnfaithfull to them, as who through their negligence was void of religion. This, Nero the tyrant founde true, who, as the Hystoriographers wyte, complayned that he had neuer a faythfull friende, no not at the last houre of his death. For why shoulde he finde them trustie, whome he wickedly had armed and set agaynst God and his Christ? Hereof ought all men in authoritie to learne a generall doctrine to vse them that belong vnto them, to the true religion and worshipping of God. For it cannot be that they will be faythfull to their Magistrates, which haue denyed their fayth vnto God. This, Constantius father to Constantine the great, well perceyued

1. The obedience of Cornelius.

The commoditie of a well instructed familie.
Gen. 24.

Eusebius in the first booke

of the lyfe of
Constantius.
Sozomenus in
the Tripar-
tite hysto-
rye, 1. booke. 7. ch.

Religion
hath place al-
so amonge
souldiers.

2. Sam. 10.

1. Sam. 17.

Pla. 18. 14-4

Eusebius in
the Ecclesi-
asticall hysto-
rye. 11. booke
and. ix. chap.
Ruffinus in
the same hys-
to-rye. 11.
booke, and
33. chap.

Cicero in hys
Oration for
Luc. Muræna.

Agaynst the
Anabaptists.

1. Peter by a
vision is en-
structed con-
cerning the
calling of the
Gentyles.

Peter goth to
his prayers
fasting.

perceyued in tyme past, which thought good to thrust them out of his Court which had at his bidding burnt sacrifice to the Goddes, thinking that they would do him little true service, which would be vnthankfull to God, and betray his true religion.

Furthermore, it is not to be omitted howe agayne he attributeth a praise of godlynesse to the souldier which vsed to wayte vpon Cornelius. For besides that it appeareth hereby howe much the conuersion of the godlye maketh to the attayning to godlynesse and saluation: We are also taught that there is no state or kinde of lyfe utterly boyde of religion, since that it hath place among souldiers in warfare which in manye mennes opinion doth then best brooke his name, when he hath cast from him all religion. Nowe best, the scripture teacheth vs, that God is the most prosperous Captaine of warres. By his conduct and leading, Ioab encounting wyth a great bande of Assirians, had a notable victorie, Dauid being ready to darren battell with Goliath, calleth vpon God for helpe. Dauid attributeth vnto God all the victories and prayse that euer he gate by warre, where he sayth that God teacheth his handes to fight. Yea, Constantinus being admonished by an Oracle, caused the signe of the holy crosse to be borne before his armies, as finding better successe vnder it, than vnder the ensignes of the Romaines Eagles. And when Theodosius in the daungerous warre agaynst Eugenius and Arbogastus, had spent an whole nyght in prayers, and was encouraged to the fyght by a sight of Angels chæring and exhorting him therevnto, we read howe the next day he had the victorie with the ayde and helpe as it were of the windes that blew that daye. Therefore their sayinges are most to be discommended, who, as the Romaine Orator sayth, there is no rowme or place for lawe or ryght whyles warres are in hande: so, they thinke warres may be made and followed without any religion. But take awaye religion, and they shall nothing differ from the rage of sauage beasts, nor cannot be defended with any honest colour, yea, they shall most cruelly rage beyonde all right and reason. These things teach vs, that the furiousnesse of the Anabaptistes is not to be suffred, which holde opinion, that it is not lawfull for a Christian man to weare a weapon, considering that these Captaynes and diuers other souldiers in the Scripture, are commended for their faith and religion. And surely their opinion is so absurde, that rather they ought to saye, that no manne can worthily weare his weapon, but he that is a Christian.

Nowe, let vs come to Peter the Apostle, whome God instructeth by a peculiar vision, that being deceyued with the common error of the Jewes, he should not reiect the message of Cornelius. And that that is here done, is not much vnlike to that we hearde before, came to passe betwene Ananias and Saule. For euen as there, so here also is Cornelius first admonished to sende for Peter. After this, Peter is certified of hys vocation, not to denye his dutie of loue, eyther to Christ, or to Cornelius. This is a peculiar and singuler argument of Gods goodnesse, which is desirous that men shoulde be saued, and come vnto the knowledge of the truth. It is good to examine all the circumstances of this vision, that the knowledge of the thinges belonging to our saluation, may appeare the playner.

First, Peter is to be considered, who as it is sayde, was gone vpper fasting into the vpper storie of the house, about the first houre of the daye,

whyle

while in the meane while his dinner was a preparing. For we haue declared before in the third Chapter, how in times passed, certaine houres were appoynted for prayers. For although the effect of prayers be bounde neyther to time nor place, yet must we obserue a certayne opportunitie in them, & certayne times must needes be prescribed for prayer, least being occupied in other businesses, we neglect a thing most necessary of all other. Peters example also teacheth vs, that prayers requyre as well a ferret going apart, and aside, as also a certayne sobrietie, in body and minde, that the deuotion of them be not extinguished by surfet and pampering of the bodye. For the which cause the Scriptures both of the olde and newe Testament, manie times ioyne praying and fasting together. This thing reproveth the foolishnesse of the hypocrites, who as they order their praying for ostentation sake, so they ascribe the prayse of merite absolutely vnto their fasting, whereas the vse thereof serueth for none other cause, but to tame and keepe vnder the fleshe, that it waxe not to proude and malapert, and so disturbe and ouerturne aswell prayer, as all other exercises of true godlynesse. See Matthew. 9. Esay. 58. chap.

Moreover, it is written, that he fell into a traunce, to thende we should vnderstand, that in this matter nothing is to be attributed to naturall sight, nor that Peter was deceyued through defect or want of hys naturall senses. For being rapt & taken as it were, out of himselfe, he perceyued these things with the eyes of his minde. For where the naturall man (as Paule sayth) perceyueeth not the things that appertayne vnto God, it followeth that his minde must be rapt by the spirite of God, out of the worlde, to perceyue the mysteries of the kingdome of heauen. This thing Paule teacheth vs by his owne example, whereas writing how he was rapt into the thirde heauen, he plainly confesseth, that he was ignozant whether this came to passe vnto him in the body or out of the body. And this thing is the more certayne to be beleued, bicause he sawe not these things with his corporall senses, which vse for the most part to be deceyued.

After these thinges, followeth a diligent description of the vision. He seeth the heauens opened, he seeth a great besell, let downe lyke vnto a cherte, bound at the foure corners. There seemed to be in the same all kinde of beastes, as well fourefooted, as creeping, and flying fowles, but specially such as in the lawe are called vncleane, concerning which, we may reade Leuit. 11. Deut. 14. Herevnto is added a voyce bidding Peter aryse, kill, and eate. Aboue all things it behoueth vs to marke the ende and scope of the vision, which by the things that followe, appeareth to haue bene none other, but that God would thereby teach vs, that all the difference which hitherto had bene betwene the Jewes and Gentyles, by reason of the ceremonies of the lawe, was nowe taken away, and that there was no impediment or let, but that the Gentyles also might be admitted into the fellowship of the Gospell and saluation gotten by Christ.

It shall appeare that this vision maketh marueylously for this present businesse, if all the mysteries in the same be thoroughly considered. For it confirmeth Peters wauering minde, and notably declareth the state of the whole Church. It is sayde that Peter was an hungred at that time. But it is playne, that he was altogether enflamed with the desire to haue Christs kingdome encreased, and the Church enlarged, hungered not so much in

Peters traunce.

2. Cor. 12.

The description
of the vision.An allegoriz-
call exposition
of the vision.

Math.15.

Iohn.3.

Eph.2.

What God
hath clen'ed,
that call not
thou foule.

body as in minde. For there fell out things which might marueylously be e his minde, for the Jewes, to whome it seemed saluation chiefly was due, had very vnworthily reiected it, yea, and persecuted it. And he thought the Gentyles vnworthye to be partakers therof: forasmuch as he knew that Christ had once commaunded that they should not go into the way of the Gentyles, but preach the Gospell vnto the lost sheepe of Israel. He remembred also that Christ took the Gentyles but as Dogs, because he saide to the woman of Cananie. It becommeth not to cast the childrens breade vnto dogges. For although Christ afterwarde commaunded the Gospell should be preached to all creatures, yet it seemed to him, that it was to be vnderstanded of such Gentyles, as shoulde forsake their heathen superstitions, and turne to the Jewes religion, and woulde vse the iustifications of the lawe of Circumcision. Therfore what other thing could Peter doe in this case, but stand amazed in great doubt and perplexitie of minde: For he sawe not of whom that Church shoulde be gathered, in the which he had so often hearde that Christ shoulde reigne. Nowe, God in this place putteth him commodiously in minde hereof, and declareth the whole maner of the gathering of his Church together, and sheweth a most euident figure of hys Church. For there was let downe from heauen, which he sawe open and parte in sunder, after an vnwonted wyse, a great linnen cloth, tyed at the fower corners, which did represent a figure of the Church. So Peter was taught that the Church was to be looked for from heauen, which is called the newe Ierusalem. Apoc. 21. and not of the iustifyings of the lawe. For except a man be borne from aboue, he shall not see the kingdome of God. And the cloth tyed at the fower corners, signified that this Church shoulde be gathered out of all the coastes of the world. There were beasts within it, which the lawe pronounced to be vncleane, these Peter was commaunded to kill, & to eate his fill. This taught vs that y Gentiles which hitherto were taken for foule people, & straungers from the publike weale of the people of god, should be killed and mortified with the spirituall sword, that is to say, wyth the preaching of the Gospell, without respect of the Jewyshe law and ceremonies, and so should be receyued into the fellowship of Christ and his Church. For nowe was come the tyme of correction, in which the bayle of the Temple was rent, and the wall broken downe by Christ, which ioyned both Nations into one fayth, and inheritaunce of one kingdome. And that thys was the meaning of the vision, the effect of the matter shall hereafter declare.

Howbeit, Peter as yet vnderstandeth not the meaning of the Lord, but being as yet holden in ouermuch obseruation of the lawe, aunswereth: Not so Lord: for I neuer eate thing that was common or vncleane. And straight waye the Lord confuted his iudgement with a graue sentence, saying: what God hath clen'ed, that call not thou common. Which sentence appertayneth to this present purpose, and teacheth vs, that neyther the meates which were forbidden by the lawe, nor the Gentyles which were signified by them, are to be taken henceforth as vncleane. It also contayneth a generall doctrine, whereby we are taught, that we ought to establishe nothing of our owne heade agaynst Gods iudgement and decre. And they offende agaynst this sentence, which thinke that vnlawfull and unholy, which God hath sanctified and made lawfull. They are here confuted, that since the abrogation of the lawe, haue brought in new differences of meates, wher-

as

as it is euident, that all meates are sanctified by the worde of God, and that the things that enter in at the mouth, defyle not a man. And we admit not their cauillation, which saye these things are appoynted for the keeping our flesh vnder, not for that they thinke meates to be vndeane of their owne nature. For if this be their meaning, why doe they smarle mennes consciences, by this precept? Why appoynt they certaine dayes for such abstinence? Why binde they poore men therevnto, tohome it is manifest are attenuated ynough by reason of continuall labour and penurie? Why permit they the richer sort, in the meane whyle to fraunche and eate fysh, and farre sette iunkets, and spiced cates, most meete to prouoke and stirre bp the fleshe vnto lust? Why graunt they them the vse of Wyne, wherewith is lecherye or ryot, as the Apostle sayth, and which is of moste force to kindle the rage of the fleshe. They are also confuted, that teache men to abstayne from Matrimonie, as though it were an impediment vnto them that haste vnto the kingdome of God, whereas God ordeyned it, and therefore must needs be lawfull and holpe, yea, moste necessarye for a man that wyll lyue godly. And Paule did not without a cause number these articles among the doctrines of the deuill. For it is more than deuillish audacitie, with open mouth to condemne that, that God hath made holy. They are agayne like faultie, which teach men howe that is lawfull that is forbidden by Gods lawe, or which dare dispence with men for money, in those things wherewith are committed agaynst the lawe of God. Both these things are in Doperie so ryfe, that by this one note a man may knowe Antichrist, to whome Daniel attributeth, that he shall haue power to alter and chaunge lawes and times. Let vs learne therefore to depende vpon Gods mouth, and to admit no constitutions, contrary vnto Gods ordinances.

1. Tim. 4.
Math. 15.

1. Tim. 4.

Furthermore, Luke sayeth this was done thre tymes, and that at length the shete or cloth was taken bp agayne, to the place from whence it came. God would haue this done thysse, because he would haue Peter thereby the more assured and perswaded. And the cloth and beastes are taken bp agayne, both that Peter should be certified that all this was done by the prouidence of God, and also that it might appeare, there was a place in heauen for them also that hitherto seemed to be excluded from thence by reason of the difference of the lawe. And this is a generall consolation. For the merite of Christ hath opened vnto vs heauen agayne, which the fall of Adam had locked against vs, and hath prepared there a place for vs, as oftentimes already hath bene declared. Therfore embracing him with true faith, let vs mortifie the olde man with the sworde of the spirite, that being bozne agayne from aboue, we may be brought thither to the societie of our Lorde and Saniour Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glorye for euer. Amen.

The cloth is
taken bp in-
to heauen as
gayne.

The.lxxij. Homelie.

WHY LE Peter mused in himselfe what this vision (which hee had seene) ment, beholde, the men which were sent from Cornelius, had made enquirance for Simons house, and stode before the doore, and called out one, and asked whether Simon which was surnamed Peter was lodged there?

Ooo. ij.

whyle

whyle Peter thought on the vision, the spirite sayde vnto him: Beholde, men seeke thee: Arise therefore and get thee downe, and go with them, and doubt not, for I haue sent them. Peter went downe to the men, which were sent vnto him from Cornelius and sayde: beholde, I am he whome ye seeke, what is the cause wherefore you are come? They sayde, Cornelius the Captayne, a iust man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the people of the Iewes, was warned by an holye Aungell to sende for thee into his house, and to heare words of thee. Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morowe Peter went away with them, and certaine brethren from Ioppa accompanied him. And the thirde day entred they into Caesarea. And Cornelius wayted for them, and had called together his kinsmen and speciall friendes. And as Peter came in, Cornelius mette him, and fell downe at his feete, and worshipped him. But Peter tooke him vp saying: Stande vppe, I my selfe also am a man.



Amongst the many and singuler works of God, whereby he hath declared his great bountie and goodnesse, the calling of the Gentyles is not last to be placed. This shall well appeare, if we expende what they were before God called them, that is to saye, straungers from the common deale of the people of God, without God, without Christ, deade through sinne, children of wrath, and to be brieft, the verye bondslaves of sinne, as in manye places Paule teacheth, & the hypocrisies of the Gentyles abundantly declare. It must therefore needes be a great goodnesse of God, that woulde take such out of the kingdome of darkenesse, into the fellowship of his sonne, and eternall saluation. But bicause it seemed to the Jewes, puffed vp with the affiance that they had in the righteousnesse of the lawe, and concerning the Gentyles, bicause they neglected Circumcision, and the other Ceremonies of the lawe, a thing to absurde, that such shoulde be adopted and receyued: It was needefull there shoulde be some euident demonstration, to proue that this was the very will of God. This did God set forth in Cornelius whome by the ministerie of an Aungell, he stirred vp to seeke the saluation that cometh by the Gospell, and also instructeth Peter the Apostle with a peculier vision, that he should not after the common error of the Jewes, thinke Cornelius and other Nations unworthy to be taught the doctrine of saluation. But of these thinges we haue intreated in the Homelies before going. Nowe let vs betwe the proceeding of the whole matter, which Luke here rehearseth in ample wyse, and at large.

t. Howe Peter was affected in mind with the heauenly vision.

He beginneth with Peter, shewing how he was affected in mynde with this heauenly vision, and howe euen at that very stounde when the messengers came from Cornelius, he was more fullye certified by the holy ghost. And he saith that Peter sate doubting, and had many and diuers cogitations arising in his mynde. For he easlye perceyued that so straunge and so often repeated a vision, coulde not be without some mysterie: howbeit, he sawe not the vse and ende thereof. But as he was pondering these things in his minde, the messengers were come, they enquired for Peter, and he in the meane whyle is certified by the spirite what he shall doe. We haue in Peter

to consider the dulnesse of mannes nature, which letteth vs that we cannot see the mysteries of the kingdome of heauen, vntill we be illuminated with the spirit of God. The consideration wherof serueth vs to this ende, that we trusting in the decterie of our wit, seeke not to drape in Gods secretes, and so entangle our selues in infinite errors. Yet in this he is to be commended, that he doth not deride or contemne the vision shewed him, although he vnderstande not the meaning of the same, but is herpe peniue, and carefull for the finding out of it, and as it is credible, went about by prayers to attayne to the knowledge of it. For God so commaundeth vs, & he deceyueth not them which by godly meditation, desire to be inspired from aboue. For this is his promise: Seeke, and you shall finde, aske, and it shall be giuen you.

And euen at that moment, that Peter was in this doubt and perplexitie, the messengers were at the doore, and enquiring for Simon the Tanner house, one commeth forth, of whome they demaunde whether Peter lodged there yea or no. And they seeme to abstayne from going in, because they were not ignozant, that the Jewes thought it abhominable, to be conuersant with the Gentyles. Therefore they woulde not ouer hastily trouble them, to whome they were sent. This is a great argument of ciuill modestie, and that nurture that Cornelius vled in his familie. But if a man would compare the souldiers of these dayes, placed in Cities for their safegarde, with these men, he shoulde perceyue such incivilitie and rigour in them, that they shall differ little or nothing from enimies. Cornelius servants and souldiers would not enter into an other mannes house, because they woulde disturbe no man agaynst his will. But our men thinke they are then moste lyke souldiers, when they burst open mens doores, search the secretest parts of their house, bereaue householders of their right in their owne house, beate them that speake against them, and satisfie their raging lust in whozedome, vpon matrones and virgins. Here appeareth also the marueylous prouidence of God, which doth not onely wonderfully gouerne the proceeding of this matter, but also euery part and parcell thereof. For by his prouidence it commeth to passe, that the messengers shoulde euen then be at the doore, when Peter was in that meditation and study, which concerned the ende and effect of this matter. Some one of little vnderstanding, standing in the concept of mans wisdom, would say, this thing happened by chaunce, & at all aduentures. But we reuerence the prouidence of God, which worketh in all things, hath the number of the heares of our head, and suffreth nothing to come to passe by hazard or peradventure. And we allowe rather the iudgement of Augustine, who was not ashamed to confesse the common errour that he vled among other, though in no wicked sense, being deceyued with these bayne wordes of fortune and chaunce.

Furthermore, to returne agayne to Peter, the holy ghost teacheth him, as he was musling of the meaning and ende of the vision, what he shoulde doe. For he sheweth him that there were men come which woulde speake with him: therefore he commaundeth him by and by to go downe, and to go with them. And he rendreth none other cause hereof, than that he sayth, he sent them: speaking nothing of the successe and effect of the thing. Nay, he commaundeth him not to doubt, or to reason, or to debate the matter to and fro with himselfe. Hereof may be gathered a generall rule, whereby we

The dulnesse
of mannes
nature.

Math. 7.

The modestie
of Cornelius
messengers.

The prouidence
of God

In his booke
agaynst
the Academi-
tes, and in
his first booke
of Retracta-
tions. i. chap.

Peter is ad-
uertised by
the holy
ghost.

we are taught that we must simply obey God, and not take our reason to counsell, when we haue hearde the expresse commaundement of God. For as God hath this authoritie ouer vs, to commaunde vs what it pleaseth him: so is it the proprietie of fayth, as it were, to captiuate all reasons vnderstanding, and to subdue it vnto the word of God, & not to suffer it to reason against the manifest commaundementes of God. For that is an ouerwicked audacitie, to go about to make the authoritie of Gods preceptes to giue place to our reasons. Therfore that that the olde Testament sheweth that Abraham sometime did, who neyther doubted of Gods promise, although he sawe it to be agaynst the course of nature, nor disobedientlye gaynesayde his commaundements, though absurde and vnrasonable to see to, the same doth the holye ghost in this place, require of Peter. We are admonished also, that it ought to suffice vs when we vnderstande, that God hath appoynted or spoken any thing: forasmuch as it is euident, he ordreth all things both wisely, and for our saluation. And this is that wrestling of fayth, wherein all such ought to be exercised, as will be taken for the true and faithfull worshippers of God. In the which if now a dayes we were more obediently and diligently occupied, we should be much lesse troubled than we be, and finde better successe in our doings.

2. Peter obeyeth the commaundement of God.

But let vs see the obedience of Peter, which he declared, when he had hearde the commaundement of the holy ghost. First without all delaye, he went doونه to them, and did nothing mutter (as the wayward doe vnderstande) whether that he was interrupted of his prayers, or let from his dinner. Then when he sawe the messengers, whome by their apparell, he might easilie iudge were Gentyles and souldiers, he friendly telleth them, that it is he they seeke for, and asketh them what the cause of their comming is. And straightway the messengers courteously aunswere him, and faithfullie declare vnto him, all that their maister had commaunded them. For both they singulerly commend their maister, and diligently report the Oracle uttered by the Angel, to the intent they might the easilier obteyne the purpose, for the which they came. And by the waye maye be seene, with what diligence and trust, Christian seruantes ought to go about their maisters businesse, that they onely serue them not in their sight, as Paule sayth, but as much as in them is, laboure when they are absent, to set forth their honesty, & to worke for their commoditie. Ephe. 6. By and by, as Peter had heard their message, he vnderstoode the mysterie and secret of the vision, and perceived that the Gentyles were signified by the vncleane beastes, whome God woulde now haue brought by preaching of the Gospell, into the fellowship of Christ, and to saluation. Wherefore, he bringeth them into the house, and the next day goeth with them, being accompanied by certayne brethren of Ioppa, who both woulde this waye declare their good affection vnto Peter, & also were chosen of God to be witnesses of so weighty a matter. Moreover, as in all these things, there appeareth a faithfull obedience, such as erewhyle we hearde the spirite of God commaunded vnto Peter: so Peter is a notable example of hospitalitie, which as it is in all men a thing most commendable: so it most becommeth Bishops and Ministers of the worde, that whyle herein they giue others good ensample, they cause their doctrine to be the better spoken of, which is the cause, that among the properties of a Bishop, Paule thinketh this also worthy to be rehearsed. Therfore

1. Tim. 3.

fore

foze by Peters example the waywardnesse of them is reprovied, who for that they will be taken to be of authoritie, beate themselfe verie straunge, and will shewe no maner of friendly familiaritie, eyther to straungers, or those of their owne house. Whome if the example of Peter cannot, yet the authoritie of Christ ought to moue, who euen then as Marke writeth, did friendly receyue all men, when by reason of the peoples importunitie preasing vpon him, he had scarce leysure to eate his meate.

Marc. 6.

3. The meeting of Peter and Cornelius.

After these things, Luke declareth the meeting of Cornelius and Peter. And of Cornelius he telleth two things. First, that he called together his kinsfolke and alliance, and all other which he was acquainted with, who all wayted for Peters coming. These thinges expresse the propertie of a true fayth. For where fayth stayeth onely vpon the worde of God, she seeth and wayteth carefully for the same. Agayne, where it burneth in desire of Gods glory, and loue of his neighbour, she is desirous to communicate saluation also vnto many others. Both these properties doth Cornelius performe, and that not without his great perill. For we haue already oftentimes declared, that it was a dangerous matter among the Romaynes, to alter or chaunge religion. Therefore it coulde not be but dangerous, to haue so many witnesses therof. But that fayth standeth in no feare of daunger, as well the Scriptures as many other examples, euerywhere declare. Let vs followe this endeour, and desire, least whyle we make prouision for our selues, we betraye the glory of God, and neglect the saluation of them which ought to be most deare vnto vs, according to the law of nature. But Cornelius doth yet another thing. For as soone as he seeth Peter the Apostle, by and by he runneth to meete him, falleth downe at his feete, and worshippeth him. These are tokens of a deuout minde, and that hath a very good opinion of the worde of God and his minister. Yet Cornelius erreth herein, and offendeth in ouermuch veneration, whyles (as may be gathered of Peters words) he attributeth more vnto him than belongeth to a man. This many times cometh to passe, when we vse y^e bnduiled zeale of our reason in reuerencing Gods Ministers. And of none other beginning sprong that superstitious worshipping of Saintes, pilgrimages, for deuotion sake, kissing of reliques, and infinite other such lyke things, then because men being beguyled with an inconsiderate zeale of religion, thought there was some sparke of godheade in them whome God had blessed sometime to the enlargement of his glory, and the saluation of others. It becometh vs therefore to lift vp our eyes to God himselfe, least whyle we will seme to be to religious we defraude God, of his due honor.

Peter refuseth godly honor.

To this purpose belongeth the answer of Peter, who doth not dissemble Cornelius error, but friendly reprehendeth him, saying: Arise, for I also am a man, as though he shoulde saye: I perceyue you haue an opinion of me, farre aboue that I am. And because you thinke there is in me some godheade, therefore you doe boushase to giue me this honor, but you are farre deceyued. For although the grace of God hath made me an Apostle, yet as touching my essence and nature, I am nothing but a man, that is to saye, mortal, frail, and sinfull, which had neede my selfe also of Gods grace, and Christs merite. Therefore giue me no diuine honour, but bestowe it on him whose ministers and seruantes aswell I am as you. This is the meaning of Peters wordes, which Paule also expessed, when he sawe the

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Actes.14.

Rom.12.

men of Lystra, in lyke sort deceyued, saying: ye men and brethren why doe you thus? we be men subiect to such infirmities as you be. Thus the Apostles put from them ouermuch honoz, which they might yet haue excused, vnder this pretence, that it made for the authoritie of the gospell. But they thought it vnmete, that any man shoulde abuse the zeale of men, and by craft goe about to purchase authoritie vnto their doctrine. These things teach vs, that all such honoz is ouermuch as is giuen vnto creatures vnder pretence of godly worshop. Paule prescribeth duties of ciuilitie, and commaundeth that one goe before another in honour. It is a wicked blaspheming of Gods honoz, if we applye vnto Creatures, that that is due to God alone. Here is also reprovned the outrageous pryde of the Bishop of Rome, which chalengeyth to him the supremacie, vnder pretence of Peter, and suffreth all that come before him, not onely to fall downe at his fete, but also compelleth kings and Emperors to kisse his fete, and is not afeard to treade on their neckes with his fowle fete: wherein he followeth not the faythfull Minister of Christ, but Caligula and Dioclesian, the monsters of mankind, which heinousnesse is so much the more greiuous and intollerable, bicause it is admitted vnder this pretence, as though there were some peece of godhead in so wicked a creature. But to let passe the aduersary of Christ, and our saluation, let vs acknowledge the mettrie of God, whereby he did witfate to call the Gentyles, let vs remember our dutie, and serue him, who hath made vs heyres of his kingdome, and colleyres with Iesus Christ, his sonne and our Sauour: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glorie for euer. Amen.

The.lxxiiij.Homely.

AND as he talked with him hee came in, and founde many that were come together. And he sayde vnto them: you know how that it is an vnlawfull thing for a man that is a Iewe to company or come vnto an Aliant: But God hath shewed me, that I shoulde not call any man common or vncleane. Therefore came I vnto you without delaye, as soone as I was sent for. I aske therefore for what intent haue you sent for me? And Cornelius sayde: This daye now. iij. dayes, about this houre, I fate fasting, and at the ix. houre I prayed in my house, and beholde, a man stoode before me in bright clothing, and sayde, Cornelius, thy prayer is hearde, and thine almes deedes are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Sende men therefore to go to Ioppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter. He is lodged in the house of one Simon a Tanner by the sea syde, which as soone as hee is come, shall speake vnto thee. Then sent I for thee immediatly, and thou hast well done that thou art come. Nowe therefore are we all here present before God, to heare all things that are commaunded vnto thee of God.



Becaule the calling of the Gentyles seemed to the Iewes, who were puffed up in the confidence of their ceremonies of the lawe, a thing not onely absurde, but also vniust, the holy ghost bleth a singular diligence in setting forth the conuersion of Cornelius, which was receyued into the Church without Circumcision, and such other Ceremonies, that it maye

appeare

appeare to all men, howe nothing is here done, by mannes aduylse, but all by Gods ordinance and appoyntment. The chiefe vse of this hystorie is as well to repressse the proude boasting of the Iewes, as to confirme our myndes in the fayth, which be all come of the Gentyles, seeing we perceyue the preachinge of saluation belongeth aswell to vs, as to the Iewes. An euident and an infallible argument whercof is this, that we heare howe Peter commeth to Caesarea by Gods leading and appoyntment, to preache saluation vnto Cornelius. The same shall here appeare more playne, if we consider Peters first communication with Cornelius: wherein he excuseth his comming to the Gentyles, and Cornelius declareth his purpose why he sent for him.

Peter therefore beginneth with his excuse, partly bicause of the Iewes his brethren, who came with him from Ioppa, as we hearde before, least they might be offended at this straunge and vnaccustomed doing: and partly bicause of Cornelius friendes and kinsfolkes, which were Gentyles, least they should suspect him of lightnesse, if he had rashly transgressed the ancient blage of his people, without a iust cause. He confesseth therefore the custome of the Iewes, least he shoulde seeme rashly to haue forgotten the same. And he layeth against the same, the oracle or will of God, whose only authoritie was sufficient to excuse his doing. We must intreate of both these pointes particularly.

Peter excuseth
his going to
the Gentyles

Speaking of the custome of the Iewes, he calleth his hearers to witnesse: you knowe (sayth he) that it is not lawfull for a man that is a Iewe, to company with, or to come vnto an aliaunt. And although there be no lawe of God extant, which expressely doth inhibite it, yet the custome seemeth to take his beginning of this; bicause God forbade them to marie, or make league with the Gentiles, and speciallye the Chanaanites, least through companying with them, they might fall from the true God, and the right worshipping of him. And it is very credible, that manye vnder the pretence of such affayres, as of necessitie fall out amongst menne, were therefore the more familiar with the Gentyles, and so become the flacker in honouring of God. Which thing was the cause that the deuout and godly fathers made the boundes of this lawe yet straighter, willing to take awaye all occasion of falling from God. Hereof may be taken a generall and perpetuall precept, that they which will be called and accounted the honozers of God, must auoyde the companie of them, who they knowe are swarued and fallen from God, eyther by false religion, or else by corrupt manners and conuerlation of life. For where, of nature we be prone vnto euill, we are easily infected with the custome of other mennes vngodlynesse, and dayly examplis declare of what force companying with the euill is, in this case, and wicked talke, whereby Paule sayth, good manners are corrupted. Beside this, they are also partakers of their punishments, that delite in the company of the vngodly. Wherof the Scripture sheweth vs an example in Lot, who dwelling among the Sodomites, was first vexed with cruell warre, after that, lost his wife and all his goodes; and at length by hys daughters company proued howe much the company of a wicked Nation had hurt him, whereas by craftie and subtile meanes, they committed incest by lying with their father. Therefore it is not without a cause that Paule warneth them that are consecrated vnto Christ, not to beare the yoke wyth

Let them es-
chewe the
company of
the wicked
that will ho-
nor God.
Deut. 7.
Iosue. 23.

1. Cor. 15.

2. Cor. 6.

Apoc.18.

No manne
must be iudg-
ed vnworthye
thre the
doctrine of
saluation.

Psal.51.
Genes.8.
Esay.64.

Math.7.

Customes
must peeble
vnto the
worde of
God.

1.Cor.10.
Math.16.
Luke.8.

Cornelius ans-
were vnto
Peter.

vnbeleeuers. And our maister Christ speaking of the punishment of Antichrist, and that wicked Babilon, warneth his people earnestly to come out from among them least they be partakers of hir plagues. And if the companie of the common people doe so entrappe and beguile the godlye, then must false teachers be much more diligently auoyded, which vse craftily to creepe into mennes bosomes, and to instill the deadly payson of false doctrine into their hearts, vnbawares. See Math.7. and. 15. 2. Iohn.1. chap.

Notwithstanding, the Apostle layeth the late oracle of God agaynst the receyued custome of the Jewes, saying: But God hath shewed me, that I should not call any man common or vncleane. He calleth them vncleane in this place, that be vnworthye the doctrine of the Gospell, and of saluation. For else it is euident, that all men are and ought to be counted vncleane, forasmuch as we be conceyued and borne in sinne: the thoughts of our harts be wicked from our childehoode, and our righteousnesse is lyke filthye and arayed clowtes and ragges, as the Scriptures testifie. But because the bloude of Christ hath clenfed vs from our sinnes (1. Iohn.1. cap.) and our hearts are purged by fayth in him: no man ought rashly to be iudged vnworthye of that purification which Christ of his exceeding liberalitie offreth to all men, and most louingly giueth to as many as beleue in him: except we finde anye men to be of that kinde of dogges and hogges, before whome Christ forbiddeth vs to throbbe the pearles and holy mysteries of the kingdome of heauen. They are therefore greatly deceyued, which enuiously hide the secretes of saluation, and vse to keepe those that haue professed Christ, from the knowledg of them.

It is chiefly to be considered how the Apostle layeth the oracle of God agaynst an olde receyued custome. We are taught by this example, that such is the authoritie of Gods worde, that vnto it the things which were instituted by men of a godly zeale, and holpe intent, ought to giue place, as soone as they seme any wayes to make against the will of God. Therefore their obstinacie is very pieuish and pernicious, which go about to retayne those ceremonies in the Church, which it appeareth, haue bene deuyfed by folithe men, for the confirmation of superstition, and are very derogatory vnto the merite of Christ. They thinke it a dangerous matter to alter or change any thing. But it is much more dangerous to sticke to the obseruation of olde errors with the losse of saluation. And we ought to remember that the obedience of fayth is the ende of true Christianitie, which requireth of vs to denie our selues, and to resigne and yelde vpp all our thoughtes and iudgements vnto the will and power of God.

Moreover, Peter after his apologie and defence, demaundeth a question, to saye, for what intent they had sent for him? And this demaunde seemeth not superfluous, although Peter was both instructed before by the heavenly vision, and also by them that were sent vnto him. For by this meane he thought he woulde stirre vp in the mindes of his hearers, a diligent and an attentue heede to hearken to him, which thing if it be wanting, the Worde cannot be preached with any profite. And it doth not a little prouoke the minde and zeale of the teacher when he seeth those men desirous to heare him, whome God hath appoynted him to teache and instruct.

Nowe followeth the aunswere of Cornelius, which as it is simple and without colour, so it hath in it diuers things, which serue for the instructi-

on of all men. For he declareth the cause of his counsell, and giueth thanks vnto Peter, that he woulde vouchsafe to come vnto him, and also promisseth to giue good care vnto him, wherein he plainly admonisheth Peter of his dutie, all which we will peruse in order. He beginneth with the cause wherefore he sent for Peter, lest he shoulde seeme to any man, eyther negligent about his saluation, or else arrogant, in that he went not to Ioppa himselfe. Therefore he repeateth the things before mencioned, touching the appearing of the Angel, and it grieveth not Luke oftentimes to rehearse one thing, to the ende the truth and certaintie of the hystorie might appeare the more. The summe of all the matter is, that he was admonished by an eminent Oracle and commaundement of God, to sende for Peter. Let vs here marke howe he sayth, he abode fasting and in prayer vntill the .ix. houre of the day, which is thre a clocke at after noone with vs. This thing expreth an ardent desire of the truth, wherabout it is like he was greatly troubled by reason of the diuersity of religions, forasmuch as he sawe the Jewes differed from the Gentyles, and that there begonne a new religion among the Christians. Therefore being very carefull, lest he should swarue from the truth, he made continuall prayer vnto God, adding vnto his prayers, holy fastes: that a man may plainly perceyue that he trusted not in the merite of his fastings, but sought by them onely the vnderstanding of a truth. Compare nowe this souldier with the Monkes of these dayes, that thou mayest perceyue howe farre he passed them, both in godlynesse and discipline of the flesh. And being a publike Officer, he gaue himselfe to these exercises, whereby their error maye appeare vnto all men, which denye that perfite studie of godlynesse can consist without solitarie life. It appeareth also in this place, what the cause is, that men profite so little nowe a dayes in the studie of godlynesse. God will be incessantly called on by prayers, which then are most feruent, when they procede of a sober subduing of the flesh. But now a dayes there is small regard of prayers, and the studie of sobrietie is chaunged into surfetting and ebrietie, which thinges vse to make men vnapt, eyther to serue God or man. This drunkennesse reigneth in many places, euen among the Ministers of the worde, so that a man maye marke in them such maners as Elaye attributeth to false teachers, Chap. lvi. The Princes and those that are in office, are commonlye at their banquets betimes in the morning, and are giuen to surfetting: altogether vndermindefull of that saying of Salomon: Wo be vnto thee, o thou land, whose king is but a childe, and whose Princes are early at their banquettes. In the Commons a man may see the dayes of Noah and Loth, as Christ in times passed, taught. Why marueyle we therfore that there is so little knowledge of the truth, since those desires reigne among vs, that vse to styfle Truth, and vtterly to suppress hir.

Secondlye, Cornelius giueth Peter thanks that he woulde witSAFE to come vnto him. For so meaneth that kinde of speach which he vseth: Thou hast done well that thou art come. For where he acknowledgeth that he hath done well herein, he plainly confesseth that he is beholding to him therfore. By which example we are taught, that we must be thankfull to the Ministers of the worde. For they bring vnto vs peace and saluation, according to that saying of the Prophete, He sent out his worde and healed them. They be also to vs in steade of fathers, because through their ministerie, we bee

1. He declareth
the cause of
his sending.

Eccle. 10.

Math. 24.

Luke. 17.

2. He giueth
thanks vnto
Peter.

Psal. 107.

1. Cor. 4.
Galat. 4.

Ephes. 4.

2. Thes. 2.

3. He promiseth
seth attention

Luke. 10.
Math. 28.

The dutie of
Ministers.

borne againe, and made the sonnes and heyres of God, as we reade Paule hath oftentimes inculcated. And the Philosophers haue taught, euen by the lawe of nature, that children are neuer able to make their parentes amendes. Who then is able to recompence him, through whose labour and traueyle, he is made the sonne of God, and heire of the kingdome of heauen: For the which cause, the Prophetes vse to account saythfull teachers, among the chiefe benefites of God, as may be seene, Psal. 147. Esay. 30. Amos. 2. Mich. 6. &c. And Paule among the gittes of the holpe ghost, wherewith from aboue he adozneth his Church, maketh mention chiefly of Pastors, Teachers, Prophetes, Apostles and Euangelists. But now a dayes men are growne to such vnthankfulnesse, that they dare say Ministers are sent of the deuill, and are the publike authozs of all euill. But they shal one daye haue teachers meete for them, since they so vnthankfullye reiect the preaching of saluation.

Thirldy, Cornelius promiseth Peter obedience and attention, where he sayth: Nowe therefore we are all here present before God, to heare all thinges that are commaunded thee of God. These wordes are worthye of singuler consideration. For they teach vs what maner of persons, the hearers of the worde should be. First he sayth they are present before God. Therefore it behoueth all men that heare the worde of God in the Church, to remember aboue all thinges, that they stande in the presence of God. For this is the saying of Christ: He that heareth you, heareth me. And he promiseth that he will bee in the middle of them that are gathered together in his name. Moreover, he sayeth he is present with those that belong vnto him. This is one other thing which the hearers shoulde remember, namely, that they haue neede of teaching and instruction, and therefore it is vnmeet that they shoulde suffer their wittes at the Sermon tyme to be a woll gathering. For they that so doe, receyue the word (as Christ sayth) into the way, where it is destroyed of the birdes, and can bring forth no fruite. Finally, Cornelius is ready to heare all the things that Peter hath to say from God. Let vs thinke that the very same is required of vs also, and let vs not be so bolde as to heare and embrace some thinges, and to let passe other some, which like not our appetites and fantasie. If a man woulde compare these thinges with the vlsage of our dayes, alas, what an horrible corruption shall he finde: Many come together, but not as in the sight of God, but much like vnto those, of whome we reade in Ezechiel. 33. chap. Further, a man shall euerywhere heare such busie bodie, who when they haue hearde the worde, brag that they haue no neede of teaching and instruction. But what a number is there of those, which dare to controlle the worde of God, and will haue such thinges preached, whereof they hope to haue gayne, and will commaunde the Ministers to silence, if they speake any thing that dislyketh their affecti- ons, or which the worlde cannot brooke. Howbeit, it were better the worde were not preached to them, and they shal one daye feeble that their wicked contempt shall beare witnesse agaynst them.

These things also admonish Peter of his dutie, that he shoulde onely and frely preach the things which God had committed to him, without any inuentions of his owne braine. In the which the dutie of Ministers specially consisteth, as hath already oftentimes bene declared. Let vs set Cornelius before vs to imitate and followe, that being enflamed with lyke de-

fire

first of the worde, we may worthily receyue the doctrine of saluation, and being therby regenerated, may liue a godly life in Iesus Christ: to whom be prayse, honor, power, and glory for ever. Amen.

The.lxxiiij. Homelie.

THE N Peter opened his mouth and sayde: Of a truth, I perceyue that there is no respect of persons with God, but in all people, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousnesse, is accepted with him: you know the preaching that God sent vnto the children of Israell, preaching peace by Iesu Christ, which is Lorde ouer all things.



Although Cornelius hath sufficientely heretofore declared his great desire to knowe the truth, by godly prayer, and holy fast, yet he more euidently sheweth the same, when he heard that Peter the Apostle was come vnto him, and was ready to teach him. For he confesseth that the Apostle is welcome vnto him, and promiseth him that he will faithfully and obediently heare all that he had to say vnto him, on Gods behalfe. Which place teacheth vs what all they haue to doe, which meane to heare the worde of God profitably. Furthermore, as Cornelius sheweth vs an example of a godly and diligent hearer: so in him also it appeareth, that a godly and feruent desire vnto the word, cannot be without profite and good successe, but according to the promise of Christ, whosoever shall vnfeynedly seeke, shall finde out the will of God. For he that a little before, stirred by Peter by the oracle of an heavenly vision, to go vnto Cornelius: euen the same now also by the secret inspiration of his spirite, stirreth vpp his minde to prepare himselfe with great grauitie and diligence to teach. For so is ment by the opening of his mouth, as already hath bene declared. The argument of his Sermon is, that men are purged and saued throught Iesus Christ alone. He bleth a very commodious order. For it hath a beginning verie apt and meete to get good will and beneuolence, bicause that he sheweth howe the doctrine of saluation belongeth also vnto the Gentyles. Then in fewe wordes he comprehendeth the summe of the whole Gospell, which shortly after he professeth more at large, by hystoricall narration, confirming the same wryth testimonies both of the Prophetes and Apostles. At length he declareth the marke and ende of all these things, teaching vs that we become partakers as well of Christ, as of the saluation giuen vs in him by fayth onely. But at this time we meane to intreate but of the two first partes onely, minding to speake of the other when time and oportunitie shall serue.

He frameth his beginning with an exclamation, saying: Of a truth, I perceyue that with God there is no respect of persons. &c. The sense is, that the Gospell and doctrine of saluation belongeth aswell to the Gentyles, as to the Jewes. Heretofore there was a great space, and an high wall betwene the Jewes and the Gentyles. For Paule writeth that the Gentyles were straungers from the common weale of Israel, aliauntes from the testaments and couenantes, without hope, without Christ, and without God. And he

The argument and order of Peters sermon.

The doctrine of saluation belongeth to the Gentyles also.

Ephes. 2.

The holpe
men are ig-
nozaunt of
some things.God regard
deth no mans
person.Deut. 1.
Exod. 23.
Psal. 82.The studies
and exercises
of them that
please God.

he addeth that that maketh for the explication of this place: but now by the meanes of Christ Iesu, you which were sometime farre of, are made nye by the bloude of Christ. For he is our peace which hath made of both, one, and hath broken downe the wall that was a stoppe betweene vs. This, Peter affirmeth with great grauity, partly to make the hearers thinke well of him, at whose saluation he enuied not, after the maner of other Jewes, and partly bicause they shoulde be the moze diligent to heare those thinges which belonged to their saluation. It shall be good to examine the wordes particularly, for our moze comfort and instruction.

First, by waye of an exclamation (as we declared euen now) he sayth of a truth, or in dede, I finde. Which word declareth that he was befoze ignorant of this mysterie. For being heretofore beguiled with the comon errour of the Jewes, and bewitched with the blind preiudice of the flesh, he bled to abhorre the Gentyles, as menne prophane and abhominable befoze God. But now by the heauenlye vision, the appearing of the Angell, and wordes of Cornelius, he is taught another thing, bicause he findeth in Cornelius wordes, apparant tokens of a very Christian, and regenerated mind. Peters example teacheth vs, that the Saintes sometime are ignozaunt of some things, and therefore that we shoulde not belæue the preiudice of our reason, but that we shoulde diligently examine all thinges accoꝝding to the rule of Gods worde.

Secondly, he teacheth what he founde, verily, that God is no acceptor of persons. This word person declareth the outward shewe or appearance of man, whereby he bleth eyther to be commended or contemned: such as is Nobilitie, high parentage, riches, honors, Nation, or Countrie: basenesse of birth, pouertie, bondage, and infinite such like. The consideration whereof God commaundeth to be farre of from all Iudges, bicause where these things take place, there can be no byright iudgement. It can not be therefore, that that thing is to be founde in God, which he bleth to detest in men. And surely the Scriptures euerywhere attribute this vnto God, that he is moued with no mannes kindred or stocke, with no riches, no pouertie, no outwarde appearance, no consideration of Countrie, but sheweth himsele iust and mercifull to all men alyke. This thing is of great auayle in the cause of saluation. For it serueth to our instruction, that we contemne no man by reason of these outwarde things, forasmuch as it appeareth that God is not moued herewith, whose children we be, and it comforteth men that are in affliction, and of lowe degre, when they heare that in Christ there is neyther bonde nor free, Iewe nor Gentyll, Scythian nor Barbarous, man nor woman, rich nor poore. See Galat. 3. Colos. 3. &c.

It maketh for the explication hereof, that he streyght waye addeth what maner of men God accepteth in all kind of men, least any man might thinke he gouerned things at all auentures. For he addeth: but in all people, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousnesse, is accepted with him. He comprehendeth in two poyntes the whole lyfe of man, such as God requirereth of them that honoꝝ him. For he percloseth all religion vnder the feare of God, forasmuch as it is manifest that this feare cannot be without the knowledge of God, nor without sayth and obedience. By this worde righteousnesse he vnderstandeth that excellent vertue, that giueth to euery man that that is his, which is the best gouernoꝝ of mans whole lyfe, and sprin- geth

geth out of the fountaynes of Christian charitie. But if thou compare the corrupt nature of man with these thinges, thou shalt perceyue that these thinges are not founde, but in those people that are regenerate, and that they cannot be attayned to without the grace of God, and sayth in Christ. For howe shoulde they that are aliauntes from Christ, please God by their outward worke: seeing he is that onely mediator, in whome the father is well pleased. Therfore they are greatly deceyued, which of these wordes of Peter, thinke the merit of mans righteousnesse, may be established: forasmuch as the grace of God onely is the cause efficient of those thinges that are here so highly commended. Their error also is to be confuted, which abusing this place, affirme that euerye man may be saued in the religion of hys nation, whether he be Jewe or Turke, so that being illuminated with some reuerence of God, he seeke to accomplishe this common ryghteousnesse. But Peters meaning in this place is farre other, who rather goeth about to proue, that the doctrine of the Gospell, wherby saluation in Christ is preached, appertayneth to all men indifferently. But I praye you what needeth it to be published to all men, if saluation may be had without Christ: This kinde of people of all other is moste pernicious, who vnder the pretence of christian modestie, bicause they will not seme to boldly to condemne any man, do plainly extenuate the merit of Christ: yea, they call in doubt the righteousnesse of god, his goodnesse, wisdom, truth, & whatsoeuer vertues besides are in God. For if any man may be saued without Christ, then it appereth saluation must depend vpon our fre wil & zeale. Then came Christ into the world in bayn: then was he incarnated, suffred, & died in vaine: then rose he from the dead, & ascended into heauen in bayne. And he shall be conuincid of a lie, in þ he said: No man cometh to the father but by me. Peter also shall be reproued as a lyer, who accozding as the spirit of Christ did prompt him, sayde: there was no other name vnder heauen giuen vnto men, in which they could be saued. Furthermore, who I pray you shal say that god þ father is eyther iust or wise, or true, or mercifull, which without very great cause woulde put his sonne to such bitter sorowes and afflictions: Away therefore with these men, which whyle they will seme modest, adnihilate the mysteries of our religion. Let vs obserue the ende and marke of Peters words, and leane them to whome the light of the Gospell hath not yet shined, to the iudgement of God: who if they be saued, must nedes be saued, through the merit of Christ, vnlesse we will be contumelious, both against Christ & God.

Let vs come to the seconde part of this Sermon, which in these words conteyneth the proposition or declaration of the whole matter: ye know the preaching that God sent vnto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Iesu Christ, which is Lorde ouer all things Which wordes seme vnto me thus to signifie: I woulde not haue you (O brethren) to looke for anye newe or straunge matter. For I purpose to intreate of such a matter, as is now in euery mannes mouth, the report whereof, is vndoubtedly come euen vnto you, that is, howe God sent his sonne Iesus Christ, which is coeternall with him, and Lorde of all things, vnto the children of Israel, being made man of the Virgin Marie, and by him hath preached peace vnto them. In these wordes doth Peter comprehend all the mysteries of Christ Iesu, and of his Gospell, which shortly after he dilateth more at large by narration. Wherfore, in all these thinges we will briefly touch those thinges only, which

serue

Iohn. 14.

The proposi-
tion.

Christ is god

Iohn. 1. 3.
and. 5.

Iohn. 17.

Christ incar-
nate.

Galat. 4.

Christ is the
author of
peace be-
twene God
and man.

Rom. 1.

serue for this present place.

First, he plainly teacheth what this Christ is, where he calleth hi m
Lorde of all things. This is an euident testimonie of his diuinitie. For it
is manifest that the rule of all things pertayneth vnto God alone, bicause
he alone is the creator of all things. And it is playne, that all thinges were
made by that eternall worde, and that all power is giuen him of the fa-
ther. He must needes therefore be true God. And lette no man here object
vnto vs this worde (of giuing) as though he were therfore the lesse, bicause
he recepueth of another. For this is to be referred to the nature of manne,
which he tooke vpon him, to the which, in a certayne time appoynted, God
the father gaue that, which Christ accordyng to his Godheade, had from
euerlasting. For thus he speaketh himselfe a little before he went to his
death: Now glorifie me (ô father) with thine owne selfe, with the glory which
I had with thee ere the worlde was. The Arrians are hereby confuted, and
the Seructanes which nowe a dayes follow their steppes, and the dignitie
of Christian fayth is defended against the Jewes and Turkes, which saye
we glory and trust in one that is no more but a man.

Then Peter toucheth by the waye, the meane of our saluation, where
he sayth that that eternall worde of God Jesus Christ, was sent from God
the father. For in this worde sent, he comprehendeth all the mysterie of his
incarnation, euen as Paule also, where he sayth: when the fulnesse of tyme
came, God sent his sonne made of a woman. &c. In his incarnation are com-
prised whatsoeuer things Christ did or suffered in the flesh, for our saluation
sake, of the which things we shall hereafter intreate. Furthermore, he sayth
he was sent to the children of Israel, not that he belonged to them alone,
but for that he tooke fleshe, and was borne of them, and shoulde first shewe
himselfe to them vntill through their vnbeliefe, he shoulde be carped vnto the
gentiles. Thou shalt obserue in these things, that al these affaires of Christ,
which are preached in the gospel, are not of man, but of Gods ordering and
appoyntment. For this worde was sent from God. And it is euident,
that this is the eternall decre of God, that Jesus Christ shoulde be the King
and Priest of his people. Psal. 2. 110. Wherevpon we gather, that men strue
in vaine, by their owne power against his Gospel, which thing before this,
we hearde that Gamaliel saue, and is abundantly declared by the examples
of all ages.

Last of all, he commeth to the ende and marke of all this matter, which
is, that peace shoulde be preached by Christ Jesus. So Esaias cap. 52. spea-
king of the Preachers of the Gospel sayth: O how bewtifull are the feete of
the Ambassadour that bringeth the message from the mountayne and proclay-
meth peace. &c. Peter maketh mention of preaching, not for that Christ is the
Minister therof only, but bicause that peace wherof he is the author, is offered
to vs by preaching of the Gospel, & receiued by hearts of fayth. He specially
speaketh of that peace which is betwene god and vs, by the meane of Jesus
Christ. For before times, by reason of our sinnes, we were seperated from
god, & reputed as his enemies. And Paule writeth that the wrath of God was
declared from heauen agaynst all vngodlynesse, and vnrightheousnesse of men.
Therefore there was neede of a peacemaker and reconciler, which the
scriptures declare God the father hath giuen vs, euen Jesus Christ. For
he hath taken vpon him our sinnes, which were cause of the seperation be-

twene

twene God and vs : he hath purged them by the merite of his death, and satisfied the rigour of Gods iustice. And he being made ours by fayth, doth clothe vs with his righteousnesse, and doth defende and shielde vs, that we be able to abyde the iudgement seate of God, who otherwysse had deserued by reason of our sinnes, to be damned for euer. Thus it commeth to passe, that according to Paules doctrine, we being iustified by fayth, are at peace with God through Iesus Christ our Lorde. **Thys the father himselfe confesseth,** when from heauen he sounded that ioyfull and comfortable voyce : This is my beloued sonne, in whome I am well pleased. And this is that peace which passeth all vnderstanding, and which can by no maner of afflictions be disturbed, bicause it maketh them seeme light and easie to them which vnderstande, that God is become mercifull to them in Christ, and that they are made the children of God. This peace also breedeth ciuill & brotherly concord amongst men, bicause that by meane of Christ, all that respect of persons amongst the faythfull, wherby mutuall concord amongst men is chiefly broken, is taken away. And bicause it kindleth mens mindes woth the fire of charitie, it so graffeth in them the desire of peace, that they hate no things more deadly, than such as they knowe, hinder it. Great therefore and very execrable is the ingratitude, and iniquitie of those men, which exclaime and crye out, saying : the preaching of the gospel is the disturbaunce of publyke peace and policie. For thus they make Iesus Christ, the Prince of true and euermlasting peace, the author of those offences, which they may thanke the wicked worlde of, who therefore maketh tumultes and busineses agaynst Christ and his worde, bicause they can not suffer the light thereof, whereby their naughtie workes are reprovved. Let vs acknowledge the goodnesse of God, which doth bouchsafe to offer the doctrine of saluation vnto all men, and let vs with true fayth embrace Iesus Christ the onely author of saluation and peace : to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glorie, for euer. Amen.

Rom. 5.

Math. 3. 17.

Iohn. 3.

The. lxxv. Homelie.

YOV (I saye) knowe that woorde, which was published throughout all Iurie, and beganne in Galiley, after the baptisme which Iohn preached : howe GOD annoynted Iesus of Nazareth with the holy ghost, and with power. Which Iesus went about, doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the deuill. For God was with him.



Although Peter made this Sermon at Cæsarea, in the house of Cornelius the Captayne: yet the same apperteyneth to all men, and is mete at this daye to be most diligently considered of vs. For beside that manye thinges are gone before, which teach vs that the spirit of God was the author hereof : in this part Peter fully includeth the whole order of our iustification and saluation. And hereof he admonished his hearers in the proposition, as ere-

while we saue, whereas he promised them to speake of the eternall worde of God, which is Iesus Christ, who being Lorde of all things, and there-

foze very God, did yet boughsafe to come into the woorld, to reconcyle man- kinde vnto God the father, and to be the authoz and preacher of that moſte wholeſome peace. Now, bicaufe by theſe wordes, he plainly testified, that our ſaluation is conteyned in Jeſus Chriſt alone, he nowe beginneth by narration of the hystorie, moze at large to explicate and dilate the ſame, and that in ſuch ſort, that it maye eaſilye appeare howe all the thinges that be- long to the redẽming of mankynde, are performed by Chriſt.

When and
where Chriſt
began to bee
knowne.

He beginneth his narration with the time and place, ſhewing where and when Chriſt began to be knowne. Alſo he citeth them for witneſſes of þ things, which ſame long before had byted ſo farre abroad, leaſt any man might iudge the hystorie to be vncertaine or doubtfull: you (ſayth he) know that word which was publiſhed ouer all Iurie, and beganne in Galiley, after the baptiſme which Iohn preached. It is not without a cauſe that he maketh mention of the place, forasmuch as Eſay ſometime prophesied, that Chriſt ſhoulde beginne to preach in Galiley, as Mathew alſo hath noted in his.iii. Chapter, and Eſay. 9. And it ſeemeth he alleageth the time for none other cauſe, ſaying: this preaching beganne after the baptiſme of Iohn, bicaufe the Prophetes foreſhewed, that he ſhoulde be the firſt Miniſter of the new Teſtament, and the forerunner of the promiſed Sauour. For that thoſe things belong vnto him, which are reade in Eſay. 40. of a voyce crying in the wilderneſſe, and in Malachie of Elias, appeareth by the writings of the Euangelistes, and by the teſtimonie of Chriſt himſelfe in Mathewe the.xi. Chapter moze manifeſt, than needeth long demonstration. They are ther- fore by this place confuted, which denye that Iohn ought to be accounted a- mong the Miniſters of the Goſpell. Whereas it is playne, that he bare witneſſe of Chriſt, and ſent his Diſciples of fayth and good zeale vnto Chriſt. And prepared all the people aſwell by his doctrine, as by baptiſme, to embrace and receyue Chriſt, which office of his, his father Zacharie by inſpiration of the holy ſpirit acknowledged in him, aſſone as he was borne. We haue here rather to marke diligently, that the buſineſſe of Chriſt Je- ſus and his Goſpell, beganne by Iohn, whoſe dutie it was to prepare their mindes that ſhoulde be the Diſciples of Chriſt, by the doctrine of repen- tance and baptiſme. For this waye Chriſt thought good to declare, that he woulde haue no man to ſeek howe to lyue licentiouslye and fleſhly vnder the pretence of him: which thing it is euident, both many did in tymes paſt, and many doe the ſame in theſe dayes alſo, and euen thoſe which gloze in the name of the Goſpell. For the which cauſe Chriſt himſelfe thought good to beginne his teaching with repentance, and bade the Apoſtles afterward to beginne with the ſame. Math. 4. and.10. Luc. 24. And they are not to be hearde which ſeperate the doctrine of repentance from the Goſpell, wher- as without repentaunce we cannot be partakers of the ſaluation which is in Chriſt. And yet for all this we attribute not ſaluation to mannes merite or righteousneſſe, bicaufe we are commaunded to preach repentance in the name of Chriſt. And Peter before, Act. 5. hath taught vs that God the fa- ther hath appoynted Chriſt, to be the authoz and giuer thereof vnto vs. In the meane ſeaſon they are reproued alſo, which ſlaunderouſly ſay, that we open gappes to the fleſhe, whereby to linne, by preaching of the Goſpell, whereas theſe men for none other cauſe moze hate and perſecute the Goſ- pell, than for that it grieuouſly accuſeth and inueryeth agaynſt their open

Iohn.1.3.

The Goſpell
beganne to be
preached by
Iohn.

with

wickednesse, and the cloked hypocrisie of a great many.

Furthermore, it becometh vs to marke how the Apostle speaketh of the ministry of Iohn. For he sayeth, he preached Baptisme. He ioyneth preaching with Baptisme, to declare he was a minister both of doctrine, and the sacrament. For as by Baptisme he admonished men that they were purged & made cleane: so expounding the misteries therof by words, he taught vs þ purification is to be had in Christ only, & that worthy fruits of repentance are required of them that are purified. Wherby it appeareth, it is necessary, that teaching be ioined with the sacraments, forasmuch as without it þ misteries of the sacraments cannot be vnderstanded. So God in þ beginning commaunded that the meanyng of the feast of Pascheouer should be declared vnto the children. And we see that the sermons of þ prophets are chiefly busied in declaring the misteries of the sacrifices, and ceremonies of the lawe, while they most grieuously reprehende them, which carefully obserued the sacrifices, neglecting in the meane season the duties of life, by them signified. And Christ a little before he departed from his Disciples, comaunded them not only to baptize, but chiefly commended vnto them the preaching of the Gospell. Which thing Paule so diligently obserued, that he confesseth how he preached euerywhere, but baptized verie fewe. These thinges serue to confute them, which tying grace to the outward signs, thinke the vse of them alone sufficient vnto saluation, and vse no doctrine wherby to declare the vse of them: yea, they vse a straunge tongue in the administration of them. But how absurde a thing this ought to be iudged, Paule sheweth at large, in the first to the Corinthians and. xiii. chapter.

Having nowe declared the beginning of the Gospell, he sheweth that Jesus Christ is the author thereof, to the ende he woulde notifie vnto vs, what and what maner of one we ought to beleue he is. He expressely calleth him Jesus of Nazareth, for that we should acknowledge it is he, whom by reason of the basenesse of his countrey, and bicause of his poore and lowly conuersation outwardly, all men contemned. Him he testifieth that God annoynted, teaching by these wordes, that he is the Saviour of mankind, which God had long before ordeyned. For he maketh mention of annoynting, bicause of the olde figure. For of olde time the Priests and Kings of Israel used to be annoynted, who it is manifest, were figures of the Saviour promised. And it was a receyued opinion that the promised Saviour was called by the name of the Messias or Christ, that is to saye, annoynted, bicause this denomination did declare his Priesthode and kingdome, and all the whole order of our redemption, whereupon the Disciples being asked in the gospell, whome they sayde Jesus was, they confessed he was Christ, that annoynted of God. Moreouer, least some man might think him to be of no more excellency than other Priests and Kings, who by reason of their outward annoynting were called by the same name: Peter teacheth that he was annoynted wth the holy ghost, and with power, alluding no doubt to that verse of Dauid, who prophesying of the kingdome of that promised Saviour, sayth: God hath annoynted thee with the oyle of gladnesse aboue thy fellowes. Thus he calleth the holy ghost, by whose guyding the sonne of God became man, and so administered his kingdome and Priesthode, that there is perceyued no grieve or sorowe therein, but all kinde of pleasauntnesse and delyght. For so he interpreteth the same in the Prophet, saying:

Agg.ii.

The

Doctrine
must be ioyn-
ed vnto the
sacraments.

1. Cor. i.

Jesus is an-
noynted of
God.

1. Sam. 2.
Daniel. 9.
Psal. 94.

Math. 16.
Luke. 9.

Psal. 44.

E say. 61.

Iohn. 1. 3.

See Eusebius
in his Eccle-
siasticall hy-
storie, lib. 1.
cap. 1.

Apoc. 1.

Math. 28.

Psal. 110.

Ephes. 1.

Ephes. 4.

Heb. 9. 10

Heb. 2. 4.

E say. 42.

How Christ
accomplished
the office of a
king & priest

The spirite of the Lorde God is vpon mee, for the Lorde hath annoynted me, and sent me to preach good tydings vnto the poore, that I might bynde vp the wounded hearts, that I might preach deliuerance to the captiue, and open the pryson to them that are bounde, to restore sight vnto the blinde, and to declare the acceptable yere of the Lorde. He is sayde to be annoynted aboue hys fellowes, bicause God hath not giuen vnto him his spirite by measure, but so abundantly that we all receyue of his fulnesse. For he came downe vpon him in the visibill forme of a Dove, when he was baptised of Iohn, so that Iohn thereby knewe, that he was that Sauour that God did declare and manifest vnto mankind. See Iohn the first Chap. There be also other argumentes, which proue he passed all other annoynted of the olde Testament, whether they were Kings or Priests. For although they were called Christes or annoynted, yet had none of them power so to annoynt their subiectes, that they coulde call them after their annoynting, Christians, that is, annoynted. But this the sonne of God hath perfourmed, who hath annoynted vs, and made vs Kings and Priestes to God his father. Also none of the annoynted in the olde Testament, was worthe of diuine honour and worship. None other hath reformed the whole worlde. None hath bene had in such estimation amonge his scholers, that after his Maisters death he coulde finde in his heart to die for his maisters namesake. Moreouer, no mannes kingdome or priesthode hath endured from euer vnto this day. And bicause they were mortall men, they had neede of Vicars and Successors, to administer the office wherevnto they were called. But the sonne of God, being made the administrator of the euerlasting kingdome, hath receyued all power in heauen and in earth. And bicause he is present with hys Church, he hath neede neyther of Vicar nor Successor. The same is a king for euer, after the order of Melchisedech. For hee blesteth vs with all spirituall benediction. He teacheth vs by the outward worde, and inspiration of his holy spirite, and he giueth vnto his Church some Apostles, some Prophetes, some Euangelistes, some Pastours and Teachers. The same hath with one offering, that is to say, with the price of his body and bloud, purged the sinnes of all the world, and hath made perfite for euer, them that are sanctified. Furthermore, being gone vp into heauen, he maketh intercession for vs, and is a faithful Bishop for vs, in all those things that are to be done for vs with God. Therefore it is truly sayde of Peter, that he is the annoynted of God, that is to saye, appoynted to be the King and Priest of his people. Wherevpon we gather that all they sinne agaynst the eternall decre of God, which make to themselves any other patrones of saluation, any other Sauours of their soules, any other Priestes or intercessours. For in so doing, they robbe the sonne of God of his honoz, which he constantly affirmeth in the Prophete, he will giue to none other. Agayne, bicause it is manifest, that he is annoynted of God, we must beleeue that his power is inuincible, and that they neede not feare the force of the worlde, or of hell, which acknowledge this king. But bicause we haue otherwheres intreated of this argument, lette these fewe things for this tyme suffice.

Furthermore, least any man might thinke that Iesus the sonne of God, is deptyed with a bare name and tytle after the maner of men, Peter declareth that he hath and doth faithfully performe the office of a king and priest. At this present, he premyseth certayne generalities, declaring his benefites

toward

travarde vs, meaning hereafter to intreate of the manner of our redemption, as the Sermon following shall declare.

And first he sayeth, he went about doying good vnto all men. This is the dutie of a faithfull king and Priest, not onely to helpe them with ayde and counsell that seeke for it at his hande, but also diligently to provide and looke about who haue neede of a tutor and benefactor. This the Euangelistes teache vs that Iesus Christ the sonne of God, hath most faithfully performed. For, as for our saluation sake, he came into the worlde: so he caried the doctrine of saluation, and myracles wherewith he confirmed the same ouer all Iury & Galiley, and remayned no long whyle anywhere, but plainly confessed that he must preache to all men euerywhere. And he did not onely curteously receyue them that came to him, but also friendly inuited and called to hym all that laboured and were heauy laden, promising all them that would come vnto hym rest and refreshing. And that which it appeareth he dyd in tymes passed, the same he doth also at this daye, while he spreadeth the preaching of his Gospell wyde ouer, that it enricheth lyke a shouer of raine, now one nation, now an other, with the seede of his heauenly word, so that not without a cause it may be sayd, now adayes also he goeth by and downe, bestowing his benefites on euery man. For, he faithfully teacheth them that be in errour, he bringeth the deceyued and wandring Pilgrimes into the way, he friendly correcteth the corrupted with vice, he gently comforteth the afflicted consciences, and with his righteousnesse and satisfaction defendeth them that are feared with the rigor of Gods iudgement. Therefore, great and hydeous is the ingratitude of them, which abhorre such a benefactor, as cruell and vnnmercifull, and ble to seeke helpe and counsell at others. Yet is their iniquitie moze horrible, which wickedly reiect his word, and will not wit safe to heare it, and so cast from them that saluation, which they ought to seeke and embrace with open armes, and all kinde of diligence. Both these vices are to comunon in our dayes, the indignitie wherof if we woulde diligently expende, we shoulde lesse marueyle at the causes of so many evils, as on enery side compasse vs.

The other benefite of Iesus Christ is, sayth he, that all they that were oppressed of the Deuill, were healed by him. This appertayneth peculiarlye to the office of a King, whereof also mention is made Psal. 72. He shall kepe the simple folke by their right, defende the children of the poore, and punish the wrong dooer &c. But bicause Christ was the authoz of our spirituall redemption, Peter maketh mention of a spirituall Tyrant, to save, of the Deuill, who after he had made our first parentes guiltie of transgression, by them brought in all kinde of calamitie, and death it selfe into the worlde, and by the permission of God so oppressed all mankinde wyth his exceeding tyrannie, that he is thereof called the Prince of the worlde. For he brought to passe by sinne, that they whom God had created vnto lyfe, fell into death: that they whome God aboue all other Creatures had endued with reason, sinned agaynst the lawe of nature, that they which ought wholly to haue depended on the worde of God, suffred themselves to be seduced with the lying Oracles of the deuill, that they whome it became to haue worshipped God onely, worshipped woode and stone, and did abhominable sacrifice vnto Deuils. And for bicause feloe acknowledged the great tyrannie of the deuill, God suffred also, that many were corporallye possessed of him, and

Christ goeth
about doying
good.

Marc. 1.

Luke. 4.

Math. 11.

Esay. 55.

Christ hea-
leth those
that are op-
pressed of the
Deuill.

raged

1. Iohn. 3.

Luke. 11.

See Eusebius
in the life of
Constantine
lib. 2. See also
a like answer
of the
Devill in the
conjurers co-
spiring as
gainst Acha-
nias in Ruf-
finus. x. booke
of the Ecclef.
histoꝝ. 33. ca.

raged as well agaynst the mselues, as agaynst others, as we may learne in the hystorie of the Gospell. But for all these maladies, Iesus Christ is giuen to be our Physician, who according to the promise made in the beginning, shoulde breake the Serpents heade, and (as the Apostle sayeth) destroye the workes of the Deuill. This thing he abundantly declareth, he was both able and willing to doe, while by his worde he healeth them which were scourged with the horrible whippes of sicknesses, while he draue forth of men, deuils and vncleane spirites, and would not suffer them which before seemed Lordes ouer all thinges, once to hyll. Here to are to be referred whatsoeuer myracles of lyke sort, the Euangelistes wryte: where by is declared vnto vs, that that strong man is come, which hath entred the Deuils house, that is to saye, the worlde, hath bounde him, and taken awaye all his armor & harnesse, as Christ teacheth vs in the Gospell. Peter testifieth that all these things were done by the power of God, to aunswere the Scribes, which sayde, that he cast forth Deuils by the helpe of Belzebub. There are examples in hystories, which declare that the kingdome of the Deuill is destroyed by the power of Christ. For it is euident, that all Oracles ceased and kept silence when Christ died. And Constantinus wryteth that when Dioclesian reigned, the Deuill complayned out of Apollos caue or denne, that the Christians whome he called iust, did let that he could not giue true Oracles, as before he vsed. Howbeit, we shall a little hereafter see more euident proofes of Christs victorie agaynst the Deuill, where Peter disputeth of his death and resurrection. In the meane while it becometh vs to remember our dutie, which is, that being taken from the power of darkenesse into the kingdome of the sonne of God, we defende our libertie, and fight continually agaynst Satan our common enemye, that we be not at any time founde vnthankfull to Iesus Christ our deliuerer: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The.lxxvj.Homelie.

AND wee are witnessse of all thinges which hee did in the lande of the Iewes, and at Ierusalem, whome they slewe and hanged on tree. Him God raysed vp the thirde day, and shewed him openly, not to all the people, but vnto vs witnessses, chosen before of God for the same intent, which did eate and drinke with him after he arose from death. And hee commaunded vs to preache vnto the people, and to testifie that it is hee which was ordeyned of God, to be the iudge of quicke and deade. To him giue all the Prophets witnessse, that through his name, whosoeuer beleeueth in him, shall receyue remission of sinnes.



The Apostle Peter hath taught Cornelius the Centurion, being appoynted therevnto of God in such wyse, that he hath also set out before all men a generall and most absolute doctrine of saluation. For he preacheth vnto him Iesus Christ the onely sauour of mankind, in whome all the Scripture testifieth, that all the meane of our saluation is conteyned. And hereof in the discourse before gone, he sayd two things. First that

that God annoynted him, that is, ordeyned him to be the King and Priest of his people. Whereupon we gather that all those which appoynt to themselves any other mediatours or patrones of saluation, doe sinne agaynst the eternall purpose of God. Next, he teacheth howe diligently and saythfully Iesus Christ vled himselfe in his office. For he sayeth he went about, and of his exceeding liberalitie offered the benefite of saluation to them that sought it not. And this was the ende and purpose of all his doyng, to bring all those that were oppressed of the deuill, into the kingdome and liberty of the sonnes of god, which deliuery he declared and shewed by myracles, thorow the which he most saythfully releued those that were bered and troubled as well wyth incurable diseases, as wyth rage of deuils, by the whole some helpe and power of his worde. Now, vnto these things Peter in this place addeth that which persyteth and maketh by the doctrine of saluation. For first he declareth the order and maner that Christ vled in the redeeming of mankynde, then he sheweth what vtilite and profite commeth to vs thereby. Therefore this place is worthe to be considered of vs herpe diligently.

Before he declareth the order and maner of mannes redemption, he confirmeth his doctrine by witnesses, saying: And wee are witnesses of all the thinges which he did in the lande of the Iewes, and at Hierusalem. And it ought to seeme no absurde or straunge thing to any man, that Peter so boldly produceth himselfe among his fellowes, as witnesses of his sayings. For we haue already oftentimes hearde, howe Christ appoynted them to that charge, and a little hereafter, it shall be declared, that they were chosen of God, to beare witnesse of Iesus Christ, and of those thinges that he did concerning our saluation. These thinges teach vs howe grievously they offende, which disdayne to beleue the Gospell. For where the narration of the thyngs that Christ did, is not bare and emptye, but hath the testimonie of God: it easily appeareth that this contumely or reproch must nedes redounde vnto God, as hath bene otherwhere, at large declared.

Howbeit, as concerning the maner of our redemption, which we sayde is chiefly intreated of in this place, there are thre thinges sayde of Christ, in the which all those thinges are contayned, that was nedefull to be done in this behalfe. Among which, the first is the death of Christ, the which he toucheth but brieely, bicause it was well knowne. He saith he was by Jewes hanged on a tre and killed. He maketh mention of a tre, not so muche bicause he would expresse his cruell and horrible kinde of death, as to put the hearers in remembraunce of the mystery of that sacrifice, that Christ offered when he dyed for our sinnes. For it appeareth that sacrifices were wont to be offered and burned vpon bundels of woode. And thus doth Peter himselfe seme to interpretate this place, where as in the second chapiter of his first epistle, he writeth, that Christ bare our sinnes in his body, on the tree, that is, purged them by the sacrifice of his body, vpon the altare of the crosse. Christ teacheth vs the very same, where he sayth, that he will giue his flesh for the lyfe of the world, which it is playne, he did no where but on the crosse. Esaias the Prophet is a copious expositor of these thinges, who sayth, Chap. liij. He was wounded for our offences, and smitten for our wickednesse. For the chastisement of our peace was layde vpon him, and with his stripes are we healed. We haue all gone astraye like sheepe, euery one hath turned his owne way.

But

The Apostles are witnesses of Christ.

1. The maner howe mankinde was redeemed.

1. Our sinnes are purged by the sacrifice of Christ.

Iohn. 6.

Heb. 9.10.

¶ Death is
ouertome by
the resurrec-
tion of Christ.

1. Cor. 15.

Luke. 24.
Iohn. 21.

But the Lorde hath heaped together vpon him, the iniquitie of vs all. &c. All this pertayned vnto the Priesthode of Christ, whome it behooued after thys sort (as Paule sayth) to enter into heauen, not by the bloude of Oxen and Gores, but by his owne bloude, and offring vp himselfe to put sinne to flight, and to take awaye the sinnes of manye. And of him it behooued our redemption should take beginning, forasmuch as God being angry with vs, because of our sinnes, it was not lawfull for vs to come before his presence. And this is that profitable consideration of Christes death, if we thinke vpon the sacrifice of his body, which he offered for our sinnes. In the meane season, let vs not thinke it in vayne, that where Peter might haue made mention of his death only, he sayth also he was slayne of the Jewes. For herein he accuseth the great unkindnesse of his Nation, especially seeing a little before, he had made so diligent a mention of Christes benefites. Let vs therefore consider the continuall ingratitude of the worlde, that we offende not in wondering at the afflictions and persecutions of the godly, wherewith the doctrine of the Gospell is assaulted.

The seconde thing in the order of our redemption is, the glorious resurrection of Christ, of the which Peter entreateth the more diligently, because it is the chiefe foundation of our religion. For these sayings of Paule are well knowne: If Christ bee not risen agayne, our preaching is in vayne, and your fayth is in vayne. You bee yet in your sinnes, and they are perished which are fallen a slepe in Christ. For that we might be sure of our saluation, it was needfull that death, which hitherto had power over vs, by reason of sinne, shoulde be vanquished and ouertome. Which if it shoulde haue held Christ as fast as other men, then no man could haue had any hope, that his saluation had bene obteyned. Wherefore as Christ before that, had declared himselfe to be the Lord both of life and death, by raysing agayne Lazarus and certayne others: euen so when he had suffered death himselfe, and had bene buryed the thirde daye, lyke a valiaunt Conquerour, he burst in peeces the bandes of death, and breaking open the gates of hell, returned into lyfe agayne. And this was an euident and infallible argument, that both sinne and death was vanquished. And for because the Jewes did denye and caull at the resurrection of Christ, and to that ende, as Mathew sayth, had brybbed the souldiers with mony, therefore Peter constantly notwe defendeth the same. God (sayth he) raysed Iesus the third daye, and shewed him openly, not to all the people. (For they were unworthy to whome Christ, whome they deadly hated, shoulde so familiarly declare himselfe) but vnto vs witnesses, chosen of God before, for the same intent, which did eate and drinke with him, after he arose from death. And whereas he might haue alledged diuers other arguments of his true resurrection, he is content with that wherewith Christ himselfe declared chiefly the truth thereof, that is, howe he did once or twyse eate such meate as the disciples offered him, in their sight. This is a great gentlenesse and goodnesse of Christ, who to confirme vs in his resurrection, whose dulnesse he was well acquainted with, woulde abase himselfe so lowe, as to eate meate also (whereof his glorified body had no neede) because no man hereafter should doubt, but that he was risen agayne, in the same true and naturall bodye, which he went in, vpon the earth before. Whereby their improbitie and wickednesse is the greater, which yet cease not, scoffingly to deride the re-
surrec-

iudgement of the deade, who bicause they are lyke vnto the Jewes, shall also be iudged vnworthy, to haue saluation by Christes resurrection.

Furthermore, although Iesus Christ the sonne of God by his death and resurrection (wherin may also be included his ascention into heauen) hath accomplished our whole redemption and saluation, and therewithall hath purged our sinne, and taken awaye all the power of hell: yet Peter ioyneth a thirde thing herevnto, that is to say, his last comming, when he shall returne to iudge the quicke and the deade. For in this article, he declareth a very euident argument of Christes diuinitie, & of his kingdome. For as it is the office of a king to giue iudgemēt, euen so Christ by this argument pro-ueth his godhead, bicause he testifieth, that all iudgement is giuen him of his father. The consideration of this article is very profitabie & necessary. For if a man consider the course of thinges in this world, he shall happen vpon many thinges which may perswade him that Iesus Christ taketh no care for this world. For we see the true worshippers of Christ vexed with diuers afflictions, to be in neede, to toyle and trauaile, and to be in subiection to the wicked. Agayne, the wicked enioy all kinde of prosperitie, and vse crueltie toward others without comptrolment. Which thing of what force it is to kill sayth, the examples of the Prophetes declare, whome we reade haue bene sometyne so moued, that they haue thought they haue had iust occasion to complayne of God. And surely, who should acknowledge Christ to be a king, if he consider sometymes the vncertayne & vnworthy varietie and alteration of worldly thinges: But here let vs remember that our king and reuenger Iesus Christ slepeth not, and that there shall be one day, a daye of generall iudgement, in which they that are aliue, as wel as they that are dead, must come before the iudgement seate of Christ, to receiue in their bodies, according as they haue done, whether it be good or badde. For as Paule teacheth vs, when the Archangell soundeth the Trompe, the dead shall rise agayne, and they that be then alyue, shall be chaunged in a moment. And Peter confesseth that the Apostles were straightly commaunded to preache this article. He commaunded vs (sayth he) that we shoulde preach vnto the people, and testifie, that it is he that was ordeyned of God, to be the iudge both of the quicke and of the deade. For to let passe that which was sayde erewhyle, of the diuinitie and kingdome of Christ, the consideration of this article serueth much both for the instruction of lyfe, and comfort of the godlye. For whereas we see diuers for this cause chieflie entysed to sinne, bicause they haue perswaded themselves, that death maketh an ende of all thinges, and that there is no iudgement after this lyfe, or else thinke lyttle thereof: it can not be but a moste sharpe spurre vnto all vertue, if a man consider how he shall once be called to iudgement before Christ, & how he shall there giue an account of all his sayings and doings. Surely, the thinking hereof doth most effectuously keepe vnder the affections of wanton fleshe, and entycements of the worlde. Agayne, there can be no more strong and effectuell comfort for the godly, than to vnderstand there shall be a day of iudgement, wherein Christ shall declare their innocencie, & giue vnto them the reward of lyfe which he promised them. Therefore Christ reasoning of the signes which shall go before the later day, sayth: when these thinges begin to come to passe, lift vp your heades, for your redemption draweth nye. And Paule teacheth vs to looke for a sauour from heauen, which shall chaunge our vyle bo-

iii. Christ
iudgeth both
the quicke
and the dead.

Iohn. 5.

2. Cor. 5.

1. Cor. 15.

1. Thel. 4.

Luke. 21.

Phil. 3.

1. Thes. 4.

2. How we be
made parta-
kers of chriſt
and of ſalua-
tion.

Remiſſion of
ſinnes is in
the name of
Chriſt.

Rom. 3.

2. Cor. 5.

Iohn. 14.

Remiſſion of
ſinnes is ta-
ken holde of
by fayth.

Marc. 16.

Math. 15.

Math. 9.

dye, that he maye make it lyke vnto his glorious bodye. He teacheth alſo that the faythfull ſhoulde comfort one another with the meditation of Chriſtes laſt comming. This is a great glozy of our fayth, that maketh that daye merry and ioyfull vnto vs, whereof the wicked children of this worlde cannot thinke without great feare and ſorrowe of heart.

Nowe let vs paſſe to the ſeconde part of this place, wherein we are taught, howe we be made partakers of the ſaluation which is in Chriſt. This thing Peter ſetteth forth with great grauitie of wordes, ſaying: To him giue all the Prophetes witneſſe, that through his name whoſoeuer beleueth in him, ſhall receyue remiſſion of ſinnes. Here muſt euery thing be diſtinguiſhed, that this doctrine being ſo neceſſary, may ſeeme the more euident. For firſt, ſhewing the vtilitie of the thinges which he hath hitherto declared, he teacheth vs, that we haue forgiuenesse of our ſinnes, in the name of Chriſt. And whyle he maketh mention thereof, he plainly teſtifieth that we be ſinners, in that we haue neede thereof. And whyle he teacheth that the ſame is giuen in Chriſt, he ſheweth, that it is free, as proceeding of the mere grace of God, without our deſert: ſo that here we may heare that ſaying of Paule: All men haue ſinned, and are deſtitute of the glory of God, but are iuſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Ieſu. And here vnto is to be referred that that was ſaide before of the clenſing of our ſinnes, made on the aultar of the Crolle. For there the ſonne of God was made ſinne for vs, that we by his meanes ſhould be that righteouſneſſe which is allowed before God. By this ſaying are all maner ſectes of other religion taken cleane awaye. For where Peter ſheweth vs that we haue forgiuenesse of our ſinnes in the name of Chriſt onely, he teacheth vs, that they loſe all their labour, that ſeek it any other where, and ſo with a newe argument he confirmeth that graue ſentence that he vttered before the Senate at Ieruſalem, that there was none other name vnder heauen giuen vnto man, in which he could be ſaued. The ſame, Chriſt himſelfe affirmeth, where he ſayth: I am the way, the truth, and the lyfe. No man commeth vnto the father, but by me.

Secondarily, Peter declareth to vs by this ſentence, the meane whereby we take holde of the remiſſion of ſinnes offered vs by Chriſt. For he ſayth, euerye one that beleueth in him obtayneth the ſame. Then by fayth we obtayne forgiuenesse of our ſinnes. The reaſon of which doctrine is, that faith onely graſteth vs into Chriſt, as he ſayth himſelfe. He that eateth my fleſhe, and drinketh my bloude (that is to ſay, whoſoeuer beleueth in me) dwelleth in me and I in him. And forasmuch as forgiuenesse of ſinnes, dependeth vpon Gods free promiſe, it can none other waye be taken holde of, than by fayth. For fayth taketh holde of Chriſt, as he is ſet forth in the Goſpell, and cleaueth altogither vnto the promiſe of God. For the which cauſe, Chriſt euerywhere attributeth ſaluation vnto faith, and euerywhere repeateth that generall ſentence: He that beleueth in me, hath lyfe euerlaſting. Agayne, He that beleueth and is baptiſed, ſhall be ſaued. And he ſayth to the woman: Great is thy fayth, be it vnto thee as thou wilt. And agayne: Thy fayth hath made thee whole. And from hence tooke the Apoſtles their opinion, where they teach that men are iuſtified by fayth onely in Chriſt, that is to ſaye, deliuered and purged from their ſinnes. By the which opinion, iuſtification of workes is plainly excluded. For where iuſtification (as euen now we was declared) is to be had in Chriſt onely, which we can take holde of, none other

ther waye than by fayth, it must needes followe, that by fayth onely we are iustified. And yet we condemne not the exercise of good woorkes, but take from them the insolent tytle of merite and iustification, the glozy whereof is due onely to Christ, that Christ maye haue his glozy wholye to himselfe. For otherwise we be not ignorant, that all kinde of innocencie and righteousness is required of them, whome Jesus Christ hath restored to the libertie of the children of God, through the merite of his bloude.

But whereas Peter a little before had confirmed his doctrine by the testimonie of the Apostles, bicause no man shoulde thinke there was anye collusion or craft among them, he defendeth this cause yet by grauer authoritie, telling vs that all the Prophetes testifie the same of Christ. And there is no doubt but he stode some pretie while in reciting their testimonies, albeit that Luke, who thought it ynough to touch but the chiefe poynts of his Sermon only, for breuities sake hath passed them ouer. But it is a very easy matter to proue that which Peter here sayth out of the writings of the Prophets. For to begin with Moses, & yet not to rehearse the first promises, he writeth that Abraham beleued God, and that fayth was imputed to him for righteousness. And it is playne, that Abraham had none other faith, than the wayting for that seede, in which all Nations shoulde be blessed. And Jesus Christ sayth that he desired to see his day, and that he reioyed therein. Moses also setteth out vnto vs figures of the law, all which no man will denie, but to haue bene shadowes of Christ, especially, if he haue diligentely reade but that one Epistle to the Hebrewes. And Paule plainely proueth the iustification of fayth, out of the xxxij. Psalme. Of Hays what neede we to speake, whereas we haue heard his testimony before, wherevnto he addeth this also: by the knowledge of him which is my righteous seruaunt, he shall iustifie the multitude, for he shall beare awaye their sinnes.

And Ieremie speaking of our Sauour Christ sayth: This shall bee his name, whereby they shall call him, the Lorde, our righteousness. I omitte diuers other testimonies which might be alleaged, bicause I would not be to long, and for that it is good to leaue occasion to the studious, to seeke them. In the meane season let vs marke howe Peter groundeth vpon none other testimonies, than the Prophetes and Apostles. Whereby we learne what consent and what maner authoritie of men shoulde prouaile in matters of fayth and religion: euen theirs doubtlesse, whome it appeareth did speake by the holy ghost. Those are they by whose ministerie God would haue the booke of the olde and newe Testamentes written. If therefore any thing be brought forth contrarie to their doctrine, let vs knowe that it cometh from man, whose traditions long since are beaten downe by the sentence of God.

We haue therefore a notable and wholesome sermon of Peters, whereby the first of the Gentyles are conuerted vnto Christ. This sermon, if it be well expended, conteyneth in it, all the articles of our fayth concerning God the father, Jesus Christ his sonne, and the holy ghost. The same comprehendeth in it a perfite order of the saluation of man, which as it is sette forth to vs in Christ, so is it to be taken holde of, by fayth only in him. Which bicause it is the gift of God, it becommeth vs by continuall prayer to aske it of him, that being truly grafted into Jesus Christ, & iustified by his merit, we may be saued. To him be all praise, honor, power & glozy for euer. Amē.

The Prophets teach the iustification of fayth.

Gene. 15.

Gene. 22.
Iohn. 8.

Rem. 4.

Esay. 53.

Ierem. 23.

Math. 15.

The.lxxvij.Homelie.

Whyle Peter yet spake these wordes, the holy ghost fell on all them which hearde the preaching. And they of the Circumcision which beleueed, were astonied, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentyles also was shedde out the gift of the holye ghost. For they hearde them speake wyth tongues, and magnifie God! Then answered Peter, can any man forbydde water, that these shoulde not be baptised, which haue receyued the holy ghost as well as we? And he commaunded them to be baptised in the name of the Lorde. Then prayed they him to tarie a fewe dayes.



S God the father hath included all the meane of our saluation in Iesus Christ his sonne: so he woulde that he shoulde be the sauour and Redemer of all Nations, and not of one people onely. Whereof may be gathered euident arguments, both of the first promises and oracles of the Prophetes, and also of the last commaundement of Christ, when he sent forth his Apostles into all the worlde, to preach the Gospell. But whereas the Jewes being puffed up with the prerogative of the lawe and ceremonies thereof, bled to despyse other Nations, and woulde not bouchsafe to admit them into their congregation: it was neede there shoulde be some peculiar demonstration, to declare that the stoppe of the lawe was broken downe by Christ, and that the grace of God was offered vnto the Gentyles also without the righteousnesse of the lawe. This doth the holy ghost most luely set forth in this historie. For as God did bouchsafe to sende his Angell to Cornelius a Gentyle, and one vncircumcised, and to awake Peter by an heauenlye vision to instruct him: so Peter the Apostle preacheth vnto the same Cornelius by instinct of the holy spirite, the whole order of saluation, wyth marueylous breuitie and playnnesse, and without any mention making of the ceremonies of the lawe, teacheth vs that Iesus Christ is appoynted vs of God, in whom to haue the forgiveness of our sinnes. But least any man might thinke that Peter had ouer rashly, and without aduise blabbed out these sayinges, the effect of the matter proueth the same, which Luke for this cause the more diligently describeth, because he woulde stirre vs vpp to the more diligent consideration of the matter.

r. Peters doctrine is confirmed by the sending of the holy ghost.

First, whyle Peter as yet was speaking, it is sayde, the holy ghost fell on all them which hearde the preaching. And not long after it is sayde likewise that they spake with diuers tongues, and declared the great grace of God. The same therefore cometh here to passe, that fell out in the daye of Pentecost: and God thought good to confirme Peters doctrine which Cornelius and his kinne had receyued, by the visible sending of his holy spirite, and to declare in deepe that the grace of saluation, was alike belonging to all beleuers, whether they were Jewes or Gentiles, and that from henceforth the ceremonies of the lawe were no more to be obserued. This is euident that in the Apostles times it was a common thing to haue the visible sending of the holy ghost, to be ioyned with the preaching of the Gospell, which

which God did boughse to giue vnto them that belaued in him. By the which argument Paule prometh the iustification of fayth, agaynst them, which affirme that men are iustified by the workes of the law. For he saith: This onely woulde I learne of you, whether you receyued the spirite by the deedes of the lawe, or by the preaching of the fayth? Are you such tooles, that after you haue begonne in the spirite, you nowe ende in the flesh? He that ministrerh to you the spirite, and worketh myracles among you, doth he it through the deedes of the lawe, or by the preaching of the fayth? We haue in this place to consider the dignitie and efficacie of the working of the Gospell. For we see this is the instrument, whereby God bleth to giue his spirite, and to worke effectuously in the minde of man: so that it is not without a cause that Paule sayth: the Gospell is the power of God vnto saluation, to all that beleue it. And for the same cause he calleth the Preachers of the Gospell the ministers of the spirite. For although all they that heare the Gospell in these dayes, haue not the gyft of tongues giuen vnto them, and such other gyftes (as is euident remaind in the Church vntill the time of Irenaeus and after) be for the moste part ceased: yet it is manifest, that all they are endued with the spirite of adoption and regeneration, which duly heare the Gospell, and embrace it by fayth, whereby they crie Abba father, and which Paule calleth the earnest or pledge of our saluation: 2. Cor. 1. and. 5. And the effectes of this spirite are manifest, whyle it mortifyeth the fleshe with the earthly members thereof in the belauers, regenerateth men, illuminateth the mynde, and causeth that they which by nature are apt and meete to no goodnesse, are able to doe all thinges in Christ. Whereupon we gather a gayne, that they are not to be taken for the members of Christ, in whome there appeare no effectes of the holy spirite. For that spirite is not idle and sluggish. And Paule sayth that they which are destitute of the spirite of Christ are not his.

Agayne, this place teacheth vs what the exercises of them that beleue, are, after they haue receyued the holye ghost. They speake with straunge & new tongues: which although it come not to passe to every man as we sayd euen now: yet the holy ghost ordreth the tongues of all them that beleue, to speake those thinges which serue to the glory of God, and the edifying of other, whereof hath bene sufficiently sayde in the second Chapter. Then it is sayde, that they greatly praysed God. So doe they that truly acknowledge the grace of God, which he offreth vs in Christ: whereas contrarywise, whosoever beleue to be iustified by their workes, praise themselves. And this giuing of thanks is a sacrifice most acceptable vnto God, which he both often requireth, and the godly euerywhere bowe and promise. For here vnto appertayneth it where they promise him the bullocks of their lips. Dauid speaking hereof, sayth: what rewarde shall I giue vnto the Lorde, for all the benefites that he hath done vnto me? I will receyue the cup of saluation, and call vpon the name of the Lorde. I will paye my vowes nowe in the presence of all his people. And he testifieth that this shall please the Lorde better than a bullocke that hath hornes and hooves. These thinges teach vs what to thinke of the vnkinde and wicked raylers agaynst Gods worde, who haue a pleasure with bitternesse of tongue, to raiepe at it, and saye it is the cause of all calamitie, where it were their dutie to acknowledge and celebrate the grace of God for it.

Further

Gala. 3.

The dignitie
and efficacie
of the gospel.

Rom. 1.

2. Cor. 3.

Eusebius in
the hystorie
Ecclesiastical
v. booke, and
vi. chap.
Iooke Irenae-
us his owne
wordes in his
second booke:
agaynst here-
ties, cap. 57.

Rom. 8.

The exerci-
ses of the
faythfull.

Hos. 14.

Psa. 116.

Psa. 69.

2. How the
beholders
were affected
with the mys-
terie of sen-
ding the holy
ghost.

Euen in the
saythfull
sometime are
errores to be
founde.

1. Cor. 11.

Actes. 1.

2. Tim. 4.

Peter vnder-
standeth the
ende of the
myracle.

The reason
of baptisme.

Furthermore, let vs see howe the beholders were affected with this myracle. Amongst whome, some were Iewes, which accompanied Peter from Ioppe. Luke sayth that they were amazed, seeing the gift of the holpe ghost was poured vpon y^e Gentyles also. For although they were not ignorant what came to passe vnto Peter, yet the common error of the Iewes still bewitched them, who thought all Nations vnholie, and strangers from God, but such as were circumcised and had receyued the other ceremonies of the Iewes lawe. It is very notable, that they which are of the saythfull, are so deceyued. For hereby it appeareth, that euen to the godlye sometime the spottes of error cleaue, and therefore all things that they doe, must not be drawen to imitation. Which thing it appeareth Paule obserued, who bid- deth the Corinthians to followe him, as farre forth as they see him to followe Christ. For there is nothing so appropriate vnto man, as to erre and be de- ceuyed. Nor nothing so difficult and laborious, as to plucke vp olde rooted errors out of mennes mindes: example whereof we haue scene in the A- postles, still stumbling at the expectation and looking for, of a carnall and earthly kingdome. Therefore they are greatly deceyued, which iudge con- tinuall teaching and admonition to be superfluous and vnprofitable, seeing that blindnesse and frowardnesse of mannes witte, is such, that he taketh occasion of stumbling at every thing, and hardlye can be brought into the waye againe. Wherefore Paule was of a farre better iudgement, when he commaunded Timothie to preach in season and out of season.

But to returne to the exposition of the hystory: Peter hath a much bet- ter iudgement, who of the premisses gathereth the ende of the myracle. For where by an heauenly vision, he was commaunded to go to Cornelius, and to preach the Gospell vnto him, and seeth nowe the gifte of the holy spirite giuen to them that heare and beleue it: he easlye acknowledgeth that the grace of the Gospell belongeth to the Gentyles also, and that the vncircum- cised also, so that they beleue in Christ, ought to be receyued into the fellow- ship of the Church, forasmuch as God doth vouchsafe to giue them his holy spirite. For drawing an argument from the thing, vnto the signe thereof, he sayeth: Can anye man forbidde water, that these shoulde not be baptized, which haue receyued the holie ghost as well as we? Which is as much as if he shoulde saye: As many as are the members of Christ, must be receyued by baptisme into the fellowship of Christes Church. But no man can doubt but these men are the members of Christ, seeing they haue receyued the spi- rite of Christ as well as we. Ergo, it is reason they shoulde be baptized. And forthwith he commaundeth them to be baptized in the name of the Lorde, that is to saye, to be consecrated to Christ the Lorde, and numbred with his Church. For Peters commaundement must not so much be vnderstanded of the forme of baptisme, as of the ende and vie thereof.

Of these things it is easie to gather all the meaning of baptisme. Peter surely acknowledgeth baptisme to be the first sacrament of Gods people and Church, whereby outwardly the benefites of regeneration and adop- tion, and whatsoever else is giuen vs in Christ, are sealed vnto vs, and thereby as many as are partakers of them, are admonished of their dutie. Wherevpon we gather, that as many as it appeareth, are of the people of God, haue neede thereof. By these things are many errors confuted, that we see haue crept in, these many yeares about baptisme, & yet reigne every- where.

where. And first this place confuteth the unholy deprauers of the Sacraments, which thinke they are superfluous, for them that beleeue and are regenerate by fayth. Which kinde of men, while they greatly extoll fayth, and the grace of God, doe wickedly contemne the wisdom of God and his ordinaunces. Nowbeit, Peter sawe that Cornelius and his familie truly beleeued, and that they were indued with the holy ghost, and adopted into the number of the children of God: and yet for all that, he commaundeth them to be baptized, bicause he would not seeme to contemne Chyistes commaundement. For why shoulde he contemne the sacramentes of Chyist, which knewe that God in the olde Testament had made it death for them that contemned his sacraments: Agayne, this place confuteth the boldenesse of the Anabaptistes, which vse to keepe the children of the Chyistians from their baptisme. But Peter proueth that they are to be baptized for none other cause, but for that he sawe they were endued with the spirite of Chyist, and therefore were members of his Church. Why then shoulde not infants be baptized, by as good right, who we knowe are borne members of the Church, and who Chyist testifieth, appertayne to the kingdome of God: Moreover, the example of this place maketh agaynst the error of the Papistes, which vse to tye the grace of God vnto Sacramentes, and vse to bring it and put it in their sacraments, by exorcismes and coniuring, whereas it is euident that they are but the cognizances & tokens of the grace that is giuen vs in Chyist. And if thou well examine this place, it shall appeare yf same came to passe vnto Cornelius, that sometime was to be seene in Abraham, so that thou mayst see the sacraments of both the Testaments, had all but one reason. For Paule witnesseth that Abraham was iustified by fayth, & that he afterwarde receyued Circumcision, which was a seale of the righteousness of fayth. So we heare that Cornelius beleeued, and was endued with the spirite of God, which was an infallible argument of his regeneration and iustification: and now at length cometh baptisme, whereby all these benefytes of God are sealed and confirmed. Therefore it is euident that the grace of God is not tyed vnto baptisme, neyther that it is by baptisme, poured into vs as by a Pyper or Conduite, forasmuch as if we receyue the Sacramentes without fayth, they be vtterly superfluous, yea, we knowe they indamage the contemners of them, as maye be seene in the examples of Iudas the Traytour, and Simon the Sorcerer.

Before we leaue this place, it is good to obserue the order of iustification and saluation in the example of Cornelius. We see that he was holpen and stirred vp by the grace of God, to doe that that was good and acceptable vnto God, whereas before that, he had bene a Gentyle, and estrainged from the people of God. But being receyued into fauour, Peter the Apostle was appointed to be his teacher, to preach to him the doctrine of saluation. Cornelius beleeueth the worde being preached. The holy ghost followeth after his beliefe, which both regenerateth the minde, and also bringeth forth diuers marueylous vertues. Being illuminated with this spirite, he is giuen wholly to prayse God, and at length being baptized, he is receyued into the fellowship of Chyistes Church. This order we see obserued euerywhere. For the beginning of our saluation springeth of the grace of God, who chose vs before the foundations of the worlde were layde. He hauing chosen vs, instructeth

Contemners
of sacraments.

Anabaptists.

Marc. 10.

Papistes.

Rom. 4.

The order of
saluation.

Ephes. 1.

instructeth vs by his outwarde worde, giueth vs fayth, illuminateth vs be-
ing regenerate with his spirit, and maketh vs meete vnto every good worke.
And that which he promisseth by his worde, and offreth by his spirite vnto
the faythfull minde: the same he confirmeth by outwarde Sacramentes
also. See Rom. 9.10.

3. Cornelius
is an exam-
ple of a kinde
and thankful
hearer.

John.8.

Finally, it is declared howe Cornelius behaued himselfe after all these
things. They besought Peter (sayth Luke) to abyde with them a few dayes.
And there was none other cause of this desire, but for that they were en-
flamed with the loue of the Gospel, and desired to heare him every daye,
bicause they woulde be the more confirmed in the knowledg of true salua-
tion. Furthermore, they coulde not be so soone satisfied with the presence of
their very friende, who they perceyued had ministred so great grace vnto
them. And here is truly expressed the propertie of those that faythfully be-
leue. They lothe not the teaching of that worde, nor attribute not so much
to themselves, to thinke that they shall haue hereafter no more neede of it.
Yea, they acknowledge themselves to be men, and bicause they will be ta-
ken for the children of God, they can not be filled with the voyce of their fa-
ther, but desire to haue him still speake vnto them. Moreouer, they shewe
themselves thankfull and kinde towarde the Ministers of God, by whose
diligence they are taught in matters of fayth and saluation. For they thinke
it a matter of no great weyght, to requite them with carnall benefites which
giue vnto them spirituall riches. For they vnderstande that their saluation
dependeth chiefly on them. For the which cause they can suffer themselves
to be rebuked and chidden, as we may see in Dauid and Ezechias. But the
wicked be of a farre other minde, which vse to condemne the Ministers as
molesters of their vngodly desires, and publike eniemies, whereof the scrip-
ture sheweth examples in Pharao, Achab, the Phariseys, and infinite o-
thers. Whose vngodlynesse deserueth to feele the vengeance of Gods ius-
tice, bicause they woulde not suffer to be faythfully admonished. Lette vs
therefore acknowledge the grace of God, and embrace his worde with
thankfull myndes, studying to frame our selues thereafter, that we
maye hereafter be made partakers and heyrers of the saluati-
on promised in Iesus Christ our sauour: to whome
be prayse, honoz, power, and glorie
for euer. Amen.

The

The eleuenth chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The.lxxviii.Homely.

AND the Apostles and brethren that were in Iurie, hearde that the Hea- then also had receyued the worde of God. And when Peter was come vp to Ierusalem, they that were of the Circumcision, contended against him, saying. Thou wentest in to men vncircumcised, and diddest eate with them. But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order vnto them, saying: I was in the Citie of Ioppa praying: and in a traunce I sawe in a vision, a certayne vessell descende, as it had bene a great sheete, let downe from heauen by the fower corners, and it came to mee: into the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered and sawe fowerfooted beastes of the earth, and vermin, and wormes, and foules of the ayre. And I hearde a voyce saying vnto me: Arise Peter, slea, and eate. And I sayd, not so Lord: for nothing comon or vnclean hath at any time entred into my mouth. But the voyce aunswered me agayne from heauen: Count not thou those things common, which God hath censed. And this was done three tymes. And all were taken vp agayne into heauen. And beholde, immediatlye there were three men already come into the house where I was, sent from Caesarea vnto me. And the spirite sayde vnto mee, that I shoulde go with them without doubting. Moreover, these fixe brethren accompanied me, and wee entred into the mannes house. And he shewed vs howe he had seene an Aungell in his house, which stoode and sayde to him: Sende men to Ioppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter. He shall tell thee words, wherby both thou, and all thine house shall be saued. And as I began to preache, the holy ghost fell on them, as he did on vs at the beginning. Then came it to my remembrance howe that the Lorde sayde: Iohn baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the holy ghost. Forasmuch then as God gaue them lyke giftes as hee gaue vnto vs, when we beleueed on the Lorde Iesus Christ, what was I that I shoulde haue withstood God?



Although the blessed Euangelyst Luke hath both abundantly and diligently described the hystorie of Cornelius, which was converted vnto the fayth in the Chapter before going: yet in this Chapter he repeateth the same againe after another sort and maner of narration. The cause of which his doing was, for that it might appeare to all men, that the Gentyles were vndoubtedly called, according to Gods appointment, by preaching of the Gospell, and

S. l. s.

receyued

receyued into the communion of the Church, by the sacrament of baptisme. That the declaration hereof was necessarie, because of the Jewes, hath already oftentimes bene shewed. And the same serueth very much for our instruction, both because the grace of Gods goodnesse, is thereby marueylously set forth, and the certaintie of all our saluation (which springeth of the Jewes) is most firmly proued. Therefore no man must accuse the holy writer, for to often repeating of one thing, or of needlesse loquacitie or babling, but rather they ought to be prouoked by his diligence, the more earnestly to weygh & consider a matter of such importance. Furthermore, Luke taketh occasion to rehearse agayne the same hystorie by reason of the vniuersall iudgement of a certaine sort of persons, who being deceyued, accuse Peter, whereby he is enforced thus to declare, and open the meaning of his dooing vnto them.

r. Howe the
Church iudg-
geth of Peters
deeds.

First therefore let vs see howe the Church which was here and there dispersed through Iurie, iudged, concerning the vocation of the Gentyles. For this thing coulde not long lye hidden, both because of the notable worthynesse of the persons, and also for that it was a straunge thinge, and not sene before. Therefore he sayth the same hereof was streyght waye published ouer all Iurie. Here are two sortes of men, vttering and bewraying themselves. The first are the Apostles and brethren, by which name I suppose, the Ministers of the word, and their fellowes are here ment. Of these the Euangelist sayeth but this one thing, and no more, that they hearde the Gentyles had receyued the word of God also. Whereupon may be gathered, that although they yet vnderstode not very well the mysterie of this matter: yet being mindefull of Christian modestie, they woulde not blame or accuse Peter ouer hastily, whose credite and diligence they had by manye proofes tryed. Whose modestie the holy ghost hath set before vs to imitate, least in iudging other mennes doinges, we be ledde with vnadvised zeale, and so breake the rules of Christian charitie. Here is also to be considered the phrase or maner of speaking, where he sayth the Gentyles receyued the worde of God, whereas he might haue sayd, they receyued Christendome, & were made partakers of Christ & his Church. But this way he thought to saye somewhat more, and to make a difference betwene the true Christianitie, and counterfayte dissembling of some kinde of persons. For they receyue the worde of God, which acknowledge it to be the worde of God, and therefore laboꝝ to be transfourmed into it, and to become followers of God. So Paule writeth that the Thessalonians receyued the word, where he sayth: when you receyued of vs the worde, whereby you learned to knowe God, you receyued it not as the worde of man, but as it was in deede, the worde of God. Agayne: And you became followers of vs, and of the Lord, receyuing the worde with much affliction. They that receyue the worde of God after this sort, bring forth marueylous frutes by the same. For denying themselves, and mortifying the affections of the flethe, they forsake their olde vngodlynesse, and as children of light, followe innocencie. For they know that God is light, and that they which will haue fellowship with him, must walke in the light. And they which bragge of the Gospell, had neede oftentimes to consider this thing, least whyle they crye with open mouth, that they haue receyued the word of God, they accuse themselves of lying, shewing forth no frutes agreeable to the worde.

What it is
to receyue the
worde of God.

1. Thes. 2.

1. Thes. 1.

1. Iohn. 2.

But

But let vs come to the other kinde of men, which were not so indifferent iudges of Peters singular doing. Luke sayth these were of the Circumcision. But whereas the first sort also were circumcised and Jewes, I suppose he meaneth not here the people of the Jewes onely, but those rather which would be taken for Christians, & yet did cleave to fast vnto Circumcision, and the Ceremonies of the lawe, as necessary vnto saluation. These men (sayth Luke) ouer boldly reprehended Peters doing, and openly contended with him. And this they lay to his charge as a matter of life and death, that he went in, to men vncircumcised, that is, to Gentyles and Heathen men, and did eate with them. For thus doing, they accuse him of breaking the traditions of the Elders, and of custome, the origine whereof, we haue otherwheres declared to haue sprung of the law of God, being ouer straitly strayned. By this example we are taught, howe hurtfull a thing it is, once to be bled with error, and to continue long in the same. For commonly a certaine forwarder feruencie to defende error, is toynd therevnto, because such is the inclination of mannes nature, that none will seme to haue erred. With which vyce these men were also blinded, which would not admit the Gentyles into the congregation, albeit it was manifest by the playne testimonie of God, that they were admitted therein. So great and so tough is the corruption of mannes nature, and so inuincible is his stubboznesse in the defence of errors once receiued. And would God there were not at this day infinite examples of this kinde in those men, who being the heades of the Church, thinke it but a trylle, to defende those things which they knowe to be contrary to the expresse Oracles of Gods worde.

Furthermoze, this place teacheth vs, that no man can so prosperously and goddily doe any thing, that he shall satisfie all men. For this rather is the state of the worlde, that they that shoulde be commended, are accused and blamed. This the Scripture teacheth vs, came to passe vnto Moles, both amongst the Egyptians and the Israelites. We reade howe the Prophetes had experience of the same, who while they watched and laboured for all mennes saluation, were called disturbers of the Realme, enimies of their countrie, and authozs of all euill. And it appeareth the worlde had none other iudgement of Iesus Christ. For one while he is accused for neglecting washing of the handes, another while, for being conuersant with sinners: by & by againe, as a breaker of the Sabbath: after that, they crie out he is a Samaritane, & possessed of y^e deuill. Therfore Peter now suffreth the same y^e his maister did, & where he was worthy of singular prayse, for bringing the kingdome of God so prosperously vnto the gentiles, he is faine rather to abide y^e benymous bitings of slanderers. And they onely which are manifest enimies of Christ, doe not thus vnjustly controule him, but they also which would be taken for Christians & brethren: yea, the schollers take the fetula and rod against the Maister. The consideration herof ought to make vs patient if the like at any time do fall out vnto vs. It also teacheth vs, that we must labour rather to approue our doings to God, than to the worlde, which many times is both vnkinde to his benefactors, and for the molte part deceyued in his iudgement. Again, let vs learne that it is a great offence dishonestly to defame and slander the well doings of our brethren. For they that so doe, declare the Deuills disposition, whome the Grekes therfore haue called Diabolum, that is to saye, Deuill, because he vseth to

Peter is reprehended for his well doing.

No man can please all parties.

1. Cor. 23.
Prouer. 10.
1. Pet. 4.

The apologie
of defence
of Peter.

1. Pet. 3.

Galat. 1.

Eusebius in
the storie of
the Church, b.
booke, chap.
24. 25. 26.

Distinct. 40.
Cap. 3 of the
Popes. &c.

1. The vision
of the sheete.

Ephes. 2.

flaunder, misreport, and misconstrue all our doing and sayings. And they also breake the rules of charitie, whose propertie it is alwayes to hope well of the brethren, and rather to couer the multitude of sinnes, than to disclose and open them.

But after the vniust accusation of these waywarde men, followeth Peters Apologie or defence deuoyde of all bitternesse: the only ende and scope whereof is, to shewe that nothing is herein done, of priuate diuise, but all things by the commaundement of God, who woulde haue the Gentyles to be receyued into the communion of Christ and his Church. And bicause he saue his aduersaries mindes greatly exasperated, he frameth a diligent narration of all things, done even from the beginning, and confirmeth the same with sounde argumentes. The which narration before I touch, the modestie of the Apostle is to be considered, who thought good so humblye and carefully to excuse himselfe to those, whome (hauing so iust a cause as he had) he might eyther haue set light, and giuen no aunswere to, or at least he might snappishly haue put them back, and rebuked them. But he knewe that the same lawe aswell belonged to himselfe, as to other, where he commaunded all Christian men to be ready to giue a reason or aunswere of their doing to euery man. And as in this place he patiently suffereth the vniust censure and checke of men, in a iust quarrell: so when he was accused of Paule before all men, for his dissimulation and inconstancie, we reade he aunswered nothing disdainefully. And this we reade was alwaye the custome in the primitive Church, that Bishoppes coulde suffer and beare to be iudged and corrected by other Bishoppes. Thus it appeareth Victor the Bishop of Rome was reprehended and admonished of his dutie by Irenaeus, and certaine other Bishops of lesse famous Churches, for his ouer hastie sentence of excommunication, giuen against the Bishoppes of Asia. These things reprove the pride of the bishops of Rome, that folowed, who are not only not ashamed, to make themselves Iudges ouer all the world, but also refuse the iudgement of all men. My hart quaketh, as often as I remember that blasphemous Canone, which will not haue the Pope condemned, no not though he forget his owne and other mennes saluation, and leade with him headlong into hell, whole heapes of mennes soules. Howbeit, he coulde no maner of way more evidently haue proued himselfe to be Antichrist, than in that he refuseth the iudgement of the Church, and Bishops, challenging to themselves the supremacie ouer them all. But to let this passe, let vs hearken to Peter, intreating his cause and matter.

Peter in his Apologie blyeth a diligent narration or discourse, as euen nowe we declared, the which he so ordereth, that he reporteth not onely what was done, but sheweth also that it was well done and lawfully. And this narration consisteth of five partes or members, of all which we will speake as much as appertaineth to this present matter, letting passe that that hath bene sayde in the Chapter before going.

In the first part is containned the vision of a great vessell or sheete, let downe to him from heauen, by which God taught him, that no man from thenceforth should be iudged unworthy of the Gospell and fellowship of the people of God, for neglecting the ceremonies of the lawe: forasmuch as the stoppe of the lawe was broken downe by Iesus Christ, who had made one people of both. Peter thought it good to beginne his narration with this,

that

that it might appeare to all men, that he did nothing of his owne head, but according as God appointed.

In the second part he alleageth the sure commaundement of God, least he might be thought to haue bene beguiled by some dreame or ydle phantasie. For euen at the same time he sayeth (by the prouidence of God) they stode at his Hostesse dore, that were sent from Cornelius, and he addeth: The spirite sayde, that I shoulde go with them nothing doubting. And this is the strength of his whole defence, which he setteth against his aduersaries accusation. For they sayde: Thou wentest in to men that are vncircumised, and hast eaten with them. Therefore Peter answereth them: The spirite of the Lord bade me so to do, And being with this simplicitie of words content, he letteth passe all Rhetoricall colozs, wherewith he might haue confirmed & garnished this argument. Which example teacheth vs, that they are not to be accused, or if they be accused, they may easily be defended before Christian men, which cast of the traditions and customes of men, at Gods appoyntment. For the authoritie of this saying of the Apostles shall remaine in force for euer: we must obey God more than men. Let vs also in these dayes, with this argument defende our selues against the Papistes, which with lyke frowardnesse accuse vs, for hauing broken the traditions of men, and take occasion of offence on euery side, without any giuen on our behalf. It offendeth them, that we deny Christ is offered in the sacrament of the altar, for the sinnes of the quicke and the deade. But we laye against them the word of Christ, who yelding vp his life vpon the crosse, declared that all maner of expiation for sinne, and our redemption, was now accomlished. Furthermore, we heare Paule say, that Christ being once offered, can be offered no more. They are offended, bicause they see we haue put the ymage of Christ and the Saintes out of our Churches. But we laye for our selues agaynst them, the authoritie of God forbidding ymages to be made, and commaunding those that are made, to be made out of the way and destroyed. They are offended, bicause we haue taken away the differences of meates. But the Apostle defendeth vs, which sayth, it is a doctrine of the Deuill to bring it vp. The lyke reason there is of all other thinges in controuersie betwene vs. These we haue alleaged onely for example sake. And if our aduersaries will not yelde vnto the word of God, but will holde on, and set the customes and traditions of men against the authoritie of the same, then shall it easily appeare, that they are not the seruantes of God, but of men.

The thirde part of the narration containeth the vision of the Aungell, which we heard was sent from God vnto Cornelius. Hereof Peter thought to make mention, to declare that Cornelius did nothing vnadvisedly, but was moued by God, to sende for him to teach him. Here is diligently to be obserued, howe the Aungell speaketh of the ministerie, or preaching of the Gospell. Peter (sayth he) shall speake wordes, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saued. Then he testifieth that saluation commeth by preaching of the Gospell. This the holye Psalmist saue, when he sayde: God sent hys worde, and they were healed. And Paule sayth, that the Gospell is the power of God vnto saluation to all beleeuers. It is not thus sayd, bicause the sounde of wordes bringeth saluation, as the superstitious thinke of their exorcismes, but bicause through the preaching of the Gospell, Christ is offered

to

1. The commaundement of God.

2. The appearing of the Aungell.

3. The appearing of the Aungell.

Psalm. 107.

2. Cor. 5.

Jerem. 44.

113. The sens-
ing of the
holy ghost.

to vs, and they that preach the Gospell, be messengers in the rourne of Christ, that by their ministerie men might be reconcyled to God the father through Christ. Therefore no common weales nor families, can haue any sounde health or saluation, without they receiue the gospell of Iesus Christ. Therefore their ingratitude that saye the worde of saluation is the cause of all euils, as well priuate as publike, is most execrable, as we read was sometime objected to Ieremie. These men are ledde with the spirite of Caiphas, who also sayde, that Christ would be the authoz and cause of their destruction, vnlesse he were made awaye by the wicked conspiracie of the priests.

Fourthly, he declareth the marueylous sending of the holy ghost. The exposito: whereof he alleageth Iesus Christ to be. I remember (sayeth he) the worde of the Lorde, howe he sayde: Iohn baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the holy ghost. It seemeth that Peter reasoneth on this wise: Christ our Lorde promised to his elect, his spirite, which the worlde coulde not receiue, and he sayd, that he alone was the giuer therof. Therefore, whereas he hath sent the same spirit vnto the Gentiles, & hath bouchsafed to baptise them with his holy ghost: I could not choose but followe the example of such a guyde, nor iudge them vnworthy the baptisme of water, whom God had iudged worthy of his spirite. And Peter maketh a trimme difference betwene Christ & the Minister, bicause he would not haue that wrongfully attributed to the externe ministerie, that belongeth onely vnto Christ. But bicause we haue otherwheres entreated hereof, it shall suffice for this time, to haue noted thus much by the waye.

The fifth part conteyneth a very graue conclusion, as well in wordes as arguments. For he sayth: If God therefore gaue vnto them lyke giftes, as he gaue vnto vs which beleued in the Lord Iesus Christ, what was I that I should withstande God? It shoulde haue bene a wicked part to haue sayde, they had bene vnlike, whome God had bouchsafed to make like. But how much more greater impietie had it bene, to haue shut out from the communion of the Church, those whome God by so euident an argument had declared to haue pertayned to his Church: Yea, whome he had openly chosen and adopted: Therefore Peter confesseth that he shoulde haue bene an aduersary of God, if he had gone about any such thing. And if they be the aduersaries of God, which keepe those men from the fellowship that is in him, whom he doth bouchsafe to make members of his Church, bicause they thinke them vnworthy of so great fauor and grace: what shall we saye of them, which by false doctrine, deceiue Christes sheepe, or else rage against them with plaine force and tyrannie, bicause of their confession of Christ? They shall one daye feele his mightie and heauie hande, whose enemies they chose rather to be than his friendes & followers. It is our part so to acknowledge and embrace the grace of God, as also to bring and trayne all other to the fellowship of saluation, the which God the father hath set out to his elect in his beloued sonne Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glozy for ever. Amen.

The.lxxix.Homelie.

WHEN they heard this, they helde their peace, and glorified God, saying: Then hath God also to the Gentyles graunted repentaunce vnto lyfe.

They

They also which were scattered abroad, through the affliction that rose about Steuen, walked throughout vnto Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioche, preaching the worde to no man, but vnto the Iewes onely. Some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which when they were come to Antioche, spake vnto the Greekes, and preached the Lorde Iesus. And the hande of the Lorde was with them, and a great number belecued, and tourned vnto the Lorde.



As the Apostle Peter in conuerting of Cornelius, dyd the duetie of a godly and faythfull Apostle, whyle he thought it good to obey the expresse commaundement of God, wythout any lyn-gering: so when his doing was of some persons vniustly reprovved, he shewed an excellent example of a christian and Apostolyke modestie. For he declared the reason of his doing most friendly and diligently vnto them, of whome he might most iustly

haue requyred what authoritie they had so to doe. But leauing all other arguments apart, he bygeth this one thing, that he did nothing of hys owne denyse, but according to Gods appointment and commaundement. By which example we haue learned with what argumentes we shoulde arme our selues against those, which now a dayes accuse vs with lyke frowardnesse for breaking the traditions and customes of men. Let the authority of Gods worde suffice vs, which whosoever despyseth, he is vntwozthye of whome the Church of Christ should make any accompt.

It remaineth in this hystorie to intreate howe those men which ere-while were such knapped Comptrollers, accepted Peters Apologie or defence. He sayth, they helde their peace, and gloryfied God, saying: Then hath God also to the Gentiles graunted repentance vnto lyfe. Moreover, they were whysted and dyd not with mans reason argue or replie agaynst the commaundement and wyll of God. By which argument is abundantly declared, that they stroue not against it of malice or enuie, but rather of an inconsiderate and blinde zeale of godlynesse, which Paule also otherwheres layeth to their charge. And bicause Peter easily espyed the same affection in them, for this cause he thought to deale with them herein the more gently. For they which are ledde with a zeale of the glozy of God, and vse to cre- dyt and yelde vnto reasons shewed them, must not be cast of as incurable, or be ouer bytterlye delt withall. And this is the propertie of those that be truly faythfull, that they will willingly yelde vnto arguments, brought out of the worde of God, although they fully perceyue not the reason of the things that are sayde. For this is the true and right exercis of fayth, when we submit our reason vnto the commaundementes and worde of God, which thing Paule euerywhere teacheth vnder the obedience of fayth, which he sheweth to be the ende and scope of preaching the gospel, wherby it easily appeareth, that they are not to be taken for faythfull, which are not asha- med stiffely to contende against the manifest Oracles of Gods worde.

Furthermore, it is sayde, they glorified God: which is a mere euident signe, that they receiued Peters excuse, and admitted it with good wyll. For there be some that being subdued by force of reason, holde their peace, by-

cause

How the by-
then did ac-
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Apologie.

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2. Cor. 10.
Rom. 1. 16.

We must re-
sorce in the
saluation of
other.

So Abraham
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cause they haue not what to answere, yet as the Poet sayth, they hyde their griefe in the bottome of their hart. But he that glorifyeth God, testifieth by an infallible argument, that he is fully satisfied. We are taught, that we must reioyce and be gladde at those, whome God doth illuminate with the lyght of his truth. This we ought to doe both by reason of the desyre that euery christian man is bounde to haue of the glorie of God and also because of the loue which we ought to beare to the furtheraunce and profite of our neighbour. And surely, there is nothing that so reioyceth a faythfull soule, as to see the light of truth to spreade it selfe abroad, to the increase of Gods glory, and the saluation of many. Againe, we ought to mourne from the hart, when we see any neglect, or fall from the waye of saluation. So we read that Samuel contynually mourned, because of Saules most wretched fall. And Paule contynueth in prayers for the Jewes, and desyreth to be accursed from Christ for them, that they might be saued. But nowe a daies we be a colde in both these pointes, which thing is the chiefe cause, that the Gospell proceedeth no better.

But let vs see the wordes, wherewith they declare the affection of their minde. Then hath God also graunted to the Gentyles (say they) repentaunce vnto lyfe. God giueth repentaunce after two sortes, eyther when he graunteth time and place to repent: or else when he mollifyeth and conuerteth mens myndes by his spirite and worde, by repentance to frame themselves to a better trade of lyfe. In this place it appeareth that God did both, although the later sense be more agreeing to this present argument. It is most worthy to be obserued, where they say repentaunce vnto lyfe is giuen vnto the Gentiles, by preaching of the Gospell. For in so saying, they testifie that they speake of that repentaunce, which through fayth in Christ bringeth saluation, and which we may call the scope and marke of all the Gospell, which is, that we being reconcyled vnto God through Christ, shoulde turne vnto him with all our hartes, and liue in him. For so Paule writeth: God hath reconcyled vs vnto himselfe by Iesus Christ, and hath giuen to vs the office to preache the attonement. Nowe then are we messengers in the rowme of Christ, euen as though God did beseech you through vs. So pray we you in Christes steede to be reconcyled vnto God. They name repentaunce expressely, hauing respect vnto that saying of Christ, which commaundeth both repentaunce, and forgiveness of sinnes to be preached in his name. Neither must these two be at any time seperated, least men take occasion vnder pretence of the Gospell, to liue carnally. Againe, this hath in it a singuler comfort, that he sayeth repentaunce is giuen vnto lyfe. Therefore repentaunce in the faythfull is neuer in vayne or vnfruitfull, but maketh them partakers of saluation through Christ. There are appaunt promises of God, wherein he euerywhere promisseth lyfe vnto them, which turne vnto him with all their hart. Where he sayth: I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he conuert and liue. And we must not thinke that God flattereth or deludeth any man with vaine promises. Hereto belongeth the whole booke almost of the Judges, which proueth by many examples, that the Israelites neuer returned to God, by true repentaunce in vayne. And it is manifest that the Ninuites through faythfull repentaunce caused God to reuoke his sentence passed against them. What shall I speake of these, seeing we reade that the repentaunce that Achab had but for a season, and

little

4 reasons of
doctrines

contra

Rom. 9. 10.

How God giueth
repentance.the cause of
god's wrath
before
repentance
the effect
of repentanceGod: we must not
despise his
promises
because
we must not
despise his
promises
after it

2. Cor. 5.

Ezech. 18.

little tūne, was by the mouth of God commended: These things ought to encourage them, which stande vpon the pytbzinke of desperation, thinking that God is so offended with them for their former wickednesse, that their repentance is not acceptable vnto him. Which men woulde be comforted with these sayings of the Prophet. If your finnes were as red as Scarlet, they shall be as whyte as snowe: And though they were like purple, they shall be as whyte as woolle. Againe: The Lorde is full of compassion and mercye, long suffering, and of great goodnesse. He will not alwaye be chydng. &c.

Nowe after Luke hath made an ende of the storpe of Cornelius, which contayneth the beginning and first frutes as it were of the vocation of the Gentiles, he returneth to the discourse of the things belonging to the whole Church, which he had intermytted, and declareth howe the kingdome of Christ began to be stretched & enlarged vnto the Gentyles. And first he telleth how Antioch was conuerted vnto Christ, and how men were there first called Christians. And principally he noteth y occasion therof, saying it was because of the persecution that was rayled agaynst Steuen. And it is very worthye to be considered, where he sayth the beginning of such a benefite springing of so dolefull a cause. For howe pitifull a case the Church stode in, in the time of that persecution, we hearde in the. viii. Chapter, when the rage of persecutours went so farre, that it was not safe for a man in secrete to be a christian, when both men and women were haled out of their dozes as to a slaughterhouse, which thing was the cause that the Church being scattered hither and thither, seemed like a scratched and tozne body, that had bene incurable. But by the grace and goodnesse of God, it cometh to passe, that of euery member of this scattered Church, springeth a newe body. For the y whome this cruell tempest had thus scattered, remembring their office and dutie, beganne to preach euerywhere the name of Christ, and many of them going as farre as Phenicia and Cyprus, did illustrate those countries with the light of the Gospell. By which example the primitive Church, and sayth full of all ages might be confirmed, not to be offended with y cruell attempts of enemies, forasmuch as it appeareth by these men, that the kingdome of Christ can not be ouerthrowne, nor driuen into straightes, but is rather thereby builded by & enlarged. For that that Luke reporteth here to haue come to passe, the same the writers of the Ecclesiasticall hystorie report to haue come to passe in all persecutions. And as after horrible tempests, cleere weather commonly followeth: so it appeareth that after persecutions, the Church alway looked more bright & cheerefull. For God scattereth the deuises of Nations, but his purpose standeth fast for euer, whereby he hath made his sonne king and Ruler of all the worlde. See the Psalmes. 33. 2. & .110.

But Luke diligently intreateth of those, by whose ministry God brought to passe a matter of such weight and importance. All which were dispersed because of the faith and doctrine of Christ, & yet they agreed not in all points, touching the order & ministerie of the gospell. For some of them preached to the Jewes only, who it is lyke were ignorant of the things done betwene Peter & Cornelius. Other some which he writeth were of Cyprus & Cyrene, came to Antioch, and preached to the Graekes, that is, to the Gentyles. So it oftentimes cometh to passe, that in some things they which are counted the most faithfull seruants of Jesus Christ, doe disagree, God so disposing his giftes, that his worde may be of the more authoritie, and that the

1. Reg. 21.

E say. 1.

Psal. 103.

The spre-
ding of Chr-
stes kingdom
vnto the Ge-
ntiles.

The occasion
of the spre-
ding of the
Church, a-
rose by rea-
son of the
persecution.

Dolt: the lo: bringeth
out of death
sometimes god words by
means sometimes about
sometimes by contraries
as heur he built his
church by persecution
in creation he brought
light on of darkness
in redemption by front
of death

vs for discouragm to the
persecutors they stoue
against the stream

The Anti-
sters be they
never so god-
ly, doe some-
time disagree

Reason. they be men
and know not all things

reason 2

successes thereof shoulde not seeme to depende of a certayne conspiracie, and consent of men among themselues. Whereunto also is to be referred that that is hereafter reported of the contention that fell betwene Paule and Barnabas, which wered so hote that those singuler and chosen instrumentes of Christ, departed one from another. Therefore let it offende no man, if nowwe a dayes he see any like matter to fall out in the Church. For Paule writeth, that there must be sectes, that the elect may be tryed. Howbeit, in all this adwe, the feruent desire of spreading abroad the kingdome of Christ, is greatly to be praised, wherewith they all being enflamed, haue vtterlye forgotten the daungers that they were in a little before, and euerywhere publishe the worde of God. Such constancie ought all faithfull Ministers of Christ to haue, to thende they must not thinke they haue done all their dutie, when they haue bene once in daunger for the name of Christ. And they must not thinke they are for none other cause graunted to die, but for that they shoulde after such daunger escaped, turne vnto doing their dutie againe, and to bestowe all their life after in setting forth the glozy of Christ.

Howbeit, Luke maketh a diligent mention also of the places where these men preached. And first he nameth Phœnicia which is neare vnto Iurie, famous by reason of the Cities and people therin, and is accounted notable, euen among the prophane writers. After that, he nameth Cyprus, an Islande of great fame in the Poets writings, which they say by reason aswell of the pleasantnesse of y^e soyle, as of the dissolute maners of the inhabitants is consecrated vnto Venus. And here appeareth partlye the great goodnesse of God, which woulde bouchsafe to endue such people with the knowledge of his sonne, and partly the wonderfull and inuincible power of the Gospell, through the preaching whereof, the boundes of Christs kingdome, were in short time so enlarged, that from the mayne land it passed ouer sea, and beganne to come into the Islandes, as was long before foretolde of the Prophetes. See Psalme. 72. Esay. 60. 66. &c. He chiefly maketh mention of Antioch, which was the moste famous Citie of all the Cities of Syria. For as it was notable, by reason of Seleucus the builder thereof, and of great renoume, bicause of their wonderfull glorie and riches, so (as we shall hereafter heare) the first Church among the Gentyles, was there assembled, and flourished in such number, that they which before were called onely but Disciples of Christ, beganne nowwe to be called by a more worthy name Christians. This Citie hath had Bishops notable both in life and learning. It hath also so abounded in Martyrs, that scarce any other can be compared therewith. It is therefore wonderfull, and much to be obserued, that God woulde haue so great a Citie conuerted, by the ministerie of those men whose names be not extant. For this onely is written of them, that they were of Cyprus & Cyrene. Howbeit, it might haue pleased God, aswell to haue bled the helpe of notable Apostles. But by the vyle and contemned thinges of this worlde, after his maner, he woulde bring to passe a thing of most importance, that we might knowe howe we ought to reioyce and glozy in him, and not in man.

Now let vs see what they preached, that layd the foundations of y^e Church at Antioch. They preached (sayth Luke) the Lord Iesus. He was then the argument & theme of their doctrine, whome Paule also saith, he only acknowledged. He maketh mention onely of Iesus Christ, bicause in him is con-

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Doct: minist
must not quie other when
they haue ben in some
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spring back

Phœnicia, Cy-
prus, Antioch,
are illumina-
ted with the
Gospell.

Doct:

Rhaphae

I. Cor. i.

Iesus Christ
is the theme
and argumēt
of the Apo-
stles doctrine

tayned whatsoeuer things make for our saluation. For he is giuen vnto vs of God, to be the authour of repentance and remission of sinnes to all mankind, as hath bene declared in the fyft Chapter. For as in him onely remission of sinnes is to be founde, so that repentance that is made without fayth in Christ, cannot please God. We haue here therfore what to answer them, which reprehende vs, and scozne vs, bicause in our Sermons we inculcate and often repeate Christ only. Thus we doe, following the example of the Apostles, and we can not doe otherwoyse, forasmuch as we can fynde no saluation without Christ.

Last of all, Luke declareth a notable successe of the Gospell, saying: And a great number beleueed, and turned vnto the Lorde. He first declareth the cause efficient, least any man might ascribe it vnto the ministerie of men. For he sayth: the hande of the Lorde was with them. Whereby we gather, that all successe of fayth and saluation dependeth vpon God, and that nothing is to be attributed to man, more than the outwarde ministerie. This thing Paule declareth at large in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, the thirde Chap. And it is good oftentimes to haue the same in remembrance, both bicause Ministers shoulde not waxe to proude, and also for that they whome God hath illuminated with true faith, might learne to be thankfull vnto him. Also the Euangelist expresseth the proper ende of Christian faith, which is, that they which through ignorance or superstition, or sinne, haue turned from God, might conuert and turne againe vnto him. Therefore fayth is not occupied in bayne speculation, but is a liuely knowledge of Jesus Christ, which draweth whole man vnto the obedience of God. And they are not to be taken for Christians, which being drowned in superstition and sinne, will not conuert vnto the Lorde. Let vs therefore set before vs this marke, that we turning by true faith vnto God, may attayne to saluation in Jesus Christ our onely Sauour: to whome be prayse, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

the sayth shall preache
preacheth Christ the
comely work
Acts. 15. 1.

The successe
of the gospel.

Doct.

Reason 1

2

The.lxxx. Homelie.

Tydings of these things came vnto the eares of the congregation, which was in Ierusalem. And they sent forth Barnabas that he should go vnto Antioch, which when he came, and had seene the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart, they would continually cleaue vnto the Lorde. For he was a good man, and full of the hollye ghost, and of fayth: and much people was added vnto the Lorde. Then departed Barnabas vnto Tharsus, for to seeke Saule. And when hee had founde him, hee brought him vnto Antioch. And it came to passe, that a whole yere they had their conuersation with the cōgregation, and taught much people, insomuch that the Disciples of Antioche were the first that were called Christians.



Because God had appointed Jesus Christ his sonne, to be the Sauour of all the worlde: therefore it was requisite that all nations should be brought vnto him by preaching of the Gospell, as it appeareth by the Oracles of the Prophetes, and by the commaundement of Christ, where he bade the Apostles to go into all the world, and to bring him Disciples out of

all Nations. And howe this thing beganne to come to passe, Luke declar-
eth in this chapter. For although it be described before in the storie of Cor-
nelius conuersion to y^e fayth of Christ: yet bicause it might seme he was cal-
led vpon some speciall fauor or priuiledge: the conuersion of the notable citie
of Antioch is ioyned therevnto, in the which a Church of the Gentyles, for
many causes notable is gathered together. The beginners whereof were
certayne men that came from Cyprus and Cyrene, as was yester day decla-
red, of small or no name, yet whose names vndoubtedly are w^{ri}tten before
God in the booke of life. These men conuining into the Citie preached Je-
sus Christ onely vnto the Gentyles, teaching them that he was sent from
God the father, to giue repentance and forgiuenesse of sinnes to them that
belæue in him. And their godly enterprise wanted not a most prosperous
successe. For Gods power working most effectually by their ministry, an
innumerable sort of menne learned the fayth, and turned vnto the Lorde.
Now vnto these premisses Luke ioyneth certayne things, touching the con-
firming of the Church at Antioch. And first he declareth the kindenesse of
those of Ierusalem towardes this newe Church of Christ, which sent Bar-
nabas to them, as it were to helpe them. After that, he sheweth the sin-
gular diligence that Barnabas vsed in accomplishing the charge committed
vnto him, and last of all, his prosperous successe.

And touching the Ierosolymites, amongst whome it seemeth he num-
bereth the Apostles, he sayth but little, bicause their meaning may easily be
percepued by Barnabas doing. This is it therefore that he sayth, that when
worde was brought to Ierusalem, how Antioch was conuerted vnto Christ,
they that by reason of their office were the chiefe among them, and watched
for the saluation of all men, sent Barnabas thither to confirme the beliefe of
the newe Disciples, and to nourishe mutuall good will amonge the con-
gregations. The lyke whereof we sawe done before, when they sent
Peter and Iohn to Samaria, which being wonne by the preaching of Philip,
set open hir gates vnto the worde of God. This is a very notable example
whereby we are taught, that congregations farre distant, when neede so
requireth, shoulde be holpen both with counsell and trusty diligence of Mi-
nisters, & that they are greatly to be prayse d, that in this case vse most dili-
gence. For if Christ so greatly commende the benefite that is done, but to
one of his least Disciples, that he will at the later daye testifie, it was done
to him selfe, and promisseth a sure rewarde to him that giueth but a cup of
colde water to him that he sendeth: with howe much more glozy will he re-
warde those which confirme or saue whole congregations, by their helpe
and counsell. Lette Bishops and Christian Magistrates remember this
well, that they suffer not themselves to be plucked from doing their dute,
by such as saye they are authozs of sedition, which vse to prescribe or giue
counsaile to straungers in matters of religion.

But let vs see Barnabas, of whome Luke diligentlly speaketh. For he
declareth what maner of man he was, and what he did in these affaires of
the Antiochianes. And although his person is sufficiently described by the
things which he did at Antioch: yet haue we first to consider y^e same, that we
may be the better able to iudge of the cause of so excellent vertues as shined
in him, specially, bicause Luke for that ende and intent, describeth his pro-
pertie and condicion. He sayth, he was a good man, and full of the holy ghost,

and

2. thing
observable

1. The good
will of the
Church at
Ierusalem, to-
warde the
Church at
Antioch.

Christians though far
separated haue care
on of another

Reason on bodie
on god
on hope

vs; condemn such
as care not for their
neighbour

2 care for y^e church
ministers care

1. Of Barna-
bas.
Barnabas is a
good man.

this is rendered as a reason of his affection and exhortation afterward

1. The spirit of god and fayth go before good works

and of fayth. This is so singular a commendation of this holy man, as Demosthenes and Cicero coulde haue deuised no greater. For what greater prayse can there be, than to be called of the holy ghost good, whereas by the testimonie of Christ, there is not one good but onely God. But least any man might thinke that Luke had forgotten that saying: he sheweth straight waye, while he was bolde to call him a good man, doubtlesse, because he was full of the holy ghost, and of fayth. For although God onely be of himselfe good in deede: yet because he doth vouchsafe to giue vnto men his spirit, and by him his other vertues: there is no let, but we maye call them good, in whome appeare any arguments of Gods goodnesse, by reason of Gods spirite dwelling in them. And where fayth onely maketh vs partakers both of the spirite of God, and all other goodnesse, the same doth Luke attribute to Barnabas, saying: he was full of fayth. For by fayth are men iustified, because thereby they take holde of Christ, through whose desert they are purified from all iniquitie, and made meete for all good workes, to performe faithfully both towards God and man, whatsoeuer duties they owe vnto them. It is very good that we remember this definition of a good man, to laye it against the fonde iudgement of the worlde, which bleseth to call them that are hypocrites, and giuen to the pleasures and desires of the fleche, good men. Furthermore, we are taught by this place, what maner of men shoulde be called to beare office in the Common weale, and specially in Ecclesiasticall affaires. Euen good men surely, who it is euident are gouerned by the holy ghost, and endued with faith. For vnto such men may any thing safely be committed. And whosoever commit vnto wicked men, a boorde of Gods spirite, eyther publike or priuate matters, to them it falleth out for the most part, as we reade, it did vnto Noah, which sent the Rauen out of the Arke. And Salomon sayth very wisely, as he doth all things. He is lame of his feete, yea, drunken he is in vanitie that committeth his message to a foole. For both they are deceyued of their hope, and manye times paye for their follye and lightnesse.

Moreover, we must see what Barnabas did in the Church at Antioch, all which, Luke comprehendeth in fower articles. First he sayth: when hee came and had seene the grace of God, hee was glad. He vnderstandeth by the grace of God, the profite of faith, and the gittes of the holy ghost which followe it. And he bleseth this worde grace, to teach vs that all these thinges are giuen of Gods goodnesse. This is a notable argument of a good man, and faythfull Minister of Christ, that Barnabas reioyceth in the profite of other men. For they which lacke faith and the lightning of the holy ghost, they enuie other for the most part, seeking their owne glory. And all men followe not the modestie of Moses, which desired that all the Israelites might be filled with the holy ghost, and be instructed with the gift of prophesying. Yea there are euerywhere (the more pitie) many examples of ambitious men, which while they go about to take from other their due honour, breede great contentions in Congregations. But they which are gouerned by the spirite of Christ, and illuminated with true fayth, they easilye despyse the losse of priuate glorye, so that they perceyue they maye aduaunce the glorye of God.

After this, Barnabas exhorteth the Antiochianes, that with purpose of heart they woulde cleaue vnto the Lorde. For as in all other exercises and

studies:

fayth must be partaker
of gods spirit and that
which is good whereof
who so is voyd cannot
be good

obferu.

Prou. 26.

Barnabas re-
ioyceth at o-
ther mens
profite.
and is sol-
licitous

nor same
glorious

Barnabas ex-
horteth to
perseuerance.

Luke.9.

2.Tim.4.

Barnabas
bringeth
Paule to An-
tioch.

Iohn.5.

Math.9.

Studies: so chiefly in religion is perseuerance and continuation needfull, for he that wastleth, is not crowned or rewarded, except he wastle or strepue lawfully. And Christ alloweth not them, which haue once layd their hande to the plough, and looke behinde them. Therefore Barnabas doth well in requiring perseuerance of the Antiochians. But least he might seeme to require onely an outwarde shewe and bare bragge of wordes, he exacteth purpose of heart. For that is a true perseuerance and ioyning with our saviour Christ, when we haue dedicated and given our hearts to his seruice. And those which haue so done, no terroz of perils can feare them from the Lorde. For they esteeme all thinges but losse and damage, so that they may winne Christ. But bicause Barnabas was not ignorant, that there were many thinges, which vsed to call men from Christ, he thought that exhortation also was needfull for them, notwithstanding there appeared notable tokens of Gods grace in them, which thing caused Paule to commaunde Timothy, continually to exhort those that were committed to his charge, and by all meanes to be alwayes instant vpon them. Therefore their error is most absurde, which thinke all doctrine vnprofitable and superfluous for those which haue already once attayned to the knowledge of truth.

Thirdly, Barnabas goeth to Tharsus, from thence he bringeth Paule to Antioch, to thintent the congregation through his ministry might the more be strengthened. This is an other argument of a true faithfull minde, and feruent in loue toward Christ. For Barnabas coulde not be ignorant howe great giftes of the spirite were in Paules brest, and how much authoritie he should lose if Paule came to Antioch, who was y singularlest instrument that Christ had. But we haue before shewed, that they which are feruent in faith, seeke not to be glorified of men, but desire to promote the glory of god. Yea, it is certayne that all they lacke fayth, which are led with the desire of their owne glory & prayse: which argument Christ vseth against the Scribes of the Jewes. In y meane season, Barnabas example teacheth vs, that in well ordred congregations, the chiefe care is, to haue fit Ministers of the word, and that they shoulde be sought for, and brought from all places. Christ teacheth the same, where he biddeth vs to praye vnto the Lorde of the haruest, that he will sende forth labourers. Herof we see it came to passe, that the chiefe of the Prophetes and most noble Kings had so diligent a care and consideration of scholes, bicause without them, they perceyued the Church coulde not stande, nor the pure doctrine of fayth be maintayned. Wherefore their ingratitude is very grosse, which do not onely contemne the Ministers as persons vnprofitable, whome the Lorde of his mercy offreth, but also hate them as the greatest malefactorz that can be, and worse than Toades.

Last of all is adioyned howe Barnabas and Paule continued a whole yeare together at Antioch. For this cause vndoubtedly, for that they sawe the congregation had neede of their help. For Luke writeth not that they sate ydelie there like sluggards, but declareth y they instructed there a great company of men, in the true faith and religion of Christ. Let ministers of the Church followe this example, and while they perswade other men to perseuerance, let them constantly perseuer in their duty, and not boaste themselves of the bare name of Pastors, but lette them doe that that belongeth to true Pastors, least they become followers and successors of that foolish shepheard which is described in Zachary. xi. Chapter.

Nowe

Nowe remaineth the profite and successe of this godly and feruent diligence, which Luke sayth was notable. For first he sayth: a great company was added vnto the Lorde. Whereby it is euident, that the traueyles of the godly Ministers was not without effect. For as the worde of God, like vn- to a fruitefull seede, hath power or vertue in it selfe to bring forth fruite: so it alwayes falleth vpon some, which being well disposed to receyue it, bring forth woorthy frutes. And although some bring stony hearts, & some thorny, & giuen to all kinde of pleasures: yet hath God his people euerywhere, which receyue his seede into good hearts, and there keepe it, till it bring forth much fruite. And the Prophete beareth witnesse that the worde of God re- turneth not without fruite, or in vaine, but is like vnto a showre of raine, which wate reth the grounde, and maketh it fruitfull.

Moreouer, God blesseth the studies of his Ministers, so that they shall not labour in vaine. This ought to encourage those, that labour in the Church of Christ, to thinke their traueyles can not be lost. For if they deliuer but a fewe soules from destruction, let them thinke they haue got- ten great treasure, bicause Christ witnesseth that the saluation of one soule, cannot be redeemed with all the substance of the world. In the meane while, marke howe he sayth, this compayne was added vnto the Lorde. Then Paule and Barnabas gathered not scholers to themselves, but vnto the Lorde. For they knewe well that they must glory in Christ alone, as their teacher and maister. And they knewe Christ commaunded them to bring schollers vnto him. Therefore great is their insolencie which be authours of sectes among Christians, and make them the seruauntes of men, whome Christ hath purchased to himselfe, with the price of his bloude. See what Paule sayth against this doing in the first epistle to the Corinthians. 1.3.7 &c

There ensueth yet another commoditie, which hath gotten perpetuall and immortall glory to the Citie of Antioche. For where in that Citie the first Church of the Gentyles was gathered together, it came to passe, that they which hytherto were called but Disciples, are now first adourned with the name of Christians. And this is that newe name which God long be- fore promised hee woulde giue vnto his elect. And what greater glo- ry coule comine vnto the Antiochianes? Let the Bishoppes of proude and haughty Rome, be compared with these men, and they shall (whether they will or nill) be inforced to giue place. And yet we neuer reade that that proude tytle was giuen to Antioch, to be called the heade of the Church. But to let passe these matters, let vs rather expende the force of this name, bicause it is not giuen vs without the prouidence of God. It is euident that we be so called of the sonne of God, which according to the figure of the olde Testament wherewith Kings and Priests were annointed, is of the Gre- kes for excellencie sake called Christ, of the Hebrues Meschias, and of vs annointed, bicause God hath appointed him the vniuersall and euerlasting King and Priest of his people, as may be seene Psalm. 2. and. 110. And where he giueth himselfe and all that is his, wholye to his people, therefore he woulde haue them to be called Christians, after his owne name. And he hath not giuen vs a naked and an emptie name, but as the Apostle sayth: he hath annointed vs, and made vs Kings and Priestes to God his father. Ther- fore the vse of this name is manifolde. For first it admonisheth vs of the dignitie which we haue in Christ, wherunto there is none like, as they

shall

3. The suc-
cesse of godly
iudice and
zeale.
Whanpe are
brought vnto
the Lorde.

Luc. 8.

E say. 55.

Math. 16.

Math. 23.

Math. 28.

The Disci-
ples are cal-
led Christi-
ans.

E say. 62.

Apoc. 1.
The vse of
this name
Christian.

shall confesse which thoroughly weigh the matter. For it is plaine that there was neuer King which was able to make all the subiectes of his Reallme Kings, no not his Courtiers, or those that were of his counsaile. But such is the vertue & power of Iesus Christ, that he is able to make them Kings for euer, that acknowledge him to be their king. Then this name serueth to confirme the beliefe and certaintie of our saluation. For in Iesus Christ is God the father well pleased. Therefore he can not be angrie with vs, nor forsake vs, whome he hath boughsed to call after the name of his beloued sonne. Hence therefore may we sett arguments of consolation in aduersity, especially in the temptations of our conscience. Finally, this title admonisheth vs of our dutie, that we should not forget that we be made Kings and Priests by Christ, and that we should valiantly maintayne the dignitie of our name. It is the propertie of a King to be at his libertie, and not to be in subiection & vnder the rule of another. Let vs therfore abide in the libertie, whereunto the sonne of God hath called vs, and not suffer our selues to be oppressed hereafter with the seruitude of sinne, which is the fylthiest and miserablest thing that can be. It is the property of a King to banquish and overcome his enimies. Let vs therefore subdue and banquish the moſte cruell enimies of our saluation, Satan, the world, and the fleſhe, with all the concupiscences therof. It is the part of a king to comaunde and beare rule. Let vs therfore rule our selues & mightily overcome al those things, which leade vs crosse the way of saluation. So let vs lykewise performe the dutie of Priests, to teach, to pray, to consecrate, and offer. Wherefore it shall be our dutie, to teach those that belong vnto vs, both by word and example of lyfe, as farre forth as the dutie of our calling bindeth vs. It shall be our parts, to pray, both in secret, and openly, and to make intercession to God, not onely for our owne necessities, but also for our neyghbors. It shall also be our duties, to consecrate our selues for liuely sacrifice vnto God, and to offer to him euery day, the bullockes of our lippes, that is to say, giuing of thanks, which is the moſte acceptable and thankfull sacrifice that we can giue vnto him. These thinges myght at large be drawne through the whole lyfe of man, but it shall suffice to giue the vnlearned an occasion to expende and consider better of them. Whosoever perfourmeth these thinges is worthy to be called a Christian. And such it appeareth the Patriarches were in times past, whome God in the hundreth and fyft Psalme, calleth his anoynted, that is to saye, Christians. Such it is credible those men of Antiochia were, which first enioyed that name. And if any will presumptuously bragge of the name, they shall surely deceyue themselves, but God they cannot deceyue. Let vs therefore diligently thinke of these thinges, that remembring both our dignitie and dutie, we may aunswere to so notable and excellent a name, and being taken from this lyfe, may raigne in heauen with Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

See Eusebius
ecclesiasticall
hystory first
booke and
first chap.

The.lxxxj.Homely.

IN those dayes came Prophetes from the Citie of Ierusalem, vnto Antioch. And there stode vpon one of them named Agabus, and signified by the

the spirite, that there should be great dearth throughout all the world, which came to passe in the Emperour Claudius dayes. Then the Disciples euery man according to his abilitie, purposed to sende succour vnto the brethren which dwelt in Iurie, which thing they also did, and sent it to the Elders by the handes of Barnabas and Saule.



Although our Lorde and Saviour Iesus Christ is alwaye present with his Church, yet he suffereth it as he foretolde diuerslye and manye wayes to be troubled, hauing aduersitie, as it were, by continuall enterchaunge, still following prosperitie. The principall cause wherof is, partly for that he woulde brydle the lustynesse of our fleshe, and partlye bicause he woulde teache vs, that he is as well able to deliuer his people in aduersitie, as to

maintaine them in prosperitie. We haue heretofore seene certayne notable examples hereof. For the Gospell in the beginning being prosperouslye preached at Ierusalem, brought a great number of Disciples vnto Christ: shortly after riseth a tempest of persecution, that driueth down the flourishing of the Church flat to the ground. By and by againe when Saule was conuerted vnto Christ, sodeinly the Church was quiet, & the doctrine of Christ being caried vnto the Gentyles, gaue likelyhoode of great encrease, seeing that at Antioch the noblest Citie in all Syria, there was a Church of Gentyles assembled together, and were there first called after that noble name of Christians. But beholde, a great and straunge aduersitie following, namely a dearth, which as it troubled the whole worlde, so it most miserablye afflicted the faythfull, whose goodes were spent partlye in finding the poore of the Church, and partly were taken from them in the rage of persecution. The consideration herof is most profitable for vs, for herby we may learne the lesse to be offended, if the lyke aduersity betide vs in these dayes. And of all other, this present place is worthy to be diligently considered, as well for the manifolde comfort, as also the instruction which the holy ghost here setteth forth. For it declareth the dearth that was in the Church, and it setteth out the fatherly prouidence of God, hauing a care for the same, and also sheweth what way and counsaile the faythfull tooke, seeing the publike calamitie like to ensue. And of all these, we meane orderly to intreate.

First, we will speake of the dearth wherof prophane writers, but chiefly Iosephus and Suetonius make mention. This dearth no man will deny but was sent by the iudgement of God, except such an one as will deny God to be the gouernour of the whole worlde. For the Prophete witnesseth, that there is no plague in a Citie without the Lordes doing. And in the latwe among the punishmentes, wherewith God reuenged the contempt of hys worde, barrenesse of ground, and scarcitie of victuals are chiefly reckoned. See Leuiticus. 26. Deuter. 28. And we must not thinke that anye thing commeth vnto man by fortune, forasmuch as it appeareth that the care of Gods prouidence, extendeth it selfe euen to the sparrowes & flowres of the field. It shall be good, when such things come to passe, to search the causes of Gods iudgements, which can be founde no where swoner, than in mennes conuersation. And surely Luke seemeth to poynt, as it were with his syn-

1. The dearth in the dayes of Claudius.

Amos. 3.

Math. 6. 10.

ger, the causes of this dearth, where he writeth it was in the dayes of Claudius Caesar. For he therefore named the Prince of the world, who had then all authoritie and rule in his hande, that by him we might iudge of the whole state of the worlde, and the condicions of those dayes. For it appeareth that the vices of Princes first infect with their contagiousnesse the Nobilitie, and then their corrupt example poysoneth the Communaltie. And euen prophane writers report, that Claudius was in all poyntes a moste naughtye Prince. For from his childehode he was cumbered with diuers and continuall diseases, so that being dulled and made lumpish both in bodye and spirit, growing further in age, he was thought vnable to discharge any office publike or priuate. Insomuch that Antonia hys mother vled to say: he was a monster, & a worke of nature begunne, but not fynished: and when she woulde note any body of blockishnesse or dulnesse, she woulde say, he was moze foule than hys sonne Claudius. And his sister Liuilla hearing on a time that he should be chosen Emperour, did openly and alowde detell the vntwoorthy & vnprosperous state of the people of Rome. For he declared his corrupt nature many wayes. First he wan the good will of the souldiers with mony, wherby he came to be Emperour, during which time, he so vled himselfe, that he had much moze care of his belly, and that vnder his belly, than he had of the Emprye, as who would neuer rise from banquetting, as long as his paunche woulde holde, and till he had well whittled himselfe, alwayes burning in insatiable desire and lust after women. And it is not lyke that such a Prince coulde delight in other Nobles and Counsaylers, than such as were like to himselfe, what publike corruption of maners was in all degrees, at that time, maye easlye be coniectured by the writers of those dayes, and by the continuall sermons of Iohn, of Christ, and his Apostles, concerning repentance, whereof there had bene no such neede, if all had not bene naught. And for an accomplishment of all vice, there was the contempt and hatred of God and his worde. For where God had sent his sonne into the worlde, and by him had appoynted to reconyle mankind againe vnto himselfe, and had euerywhere published the healthfull worde of grace, a great many were bolde, not onely to contemne and hate it, but also moste cruellye to persecute it: insomuch that euen among the Jewes, which glozved in the name of God aboue all other Nations, the worde of God coulde not be brooked. Is it then any marueyle, if God denyed the fruits of the earth to this drunken and corrupt worlde, despising the whole some fowde of the heavenly worde, and woulde tame and bring vnder with famine, those that woulde so rage agaynst his Christ: verily, the Hystorographers testifie, that by reason of continuall drowthes, and scarcitie of victuals, reygning aswell euerywhere, as at Rome, Claudius Caesar was once in daunger of his lyfe, hardly escaping, but that the people being wearye of that dearth, had lyke to haue stoned him. Such examples as these, teach vs what the cause of publike calamities is, verily, publike byres and contempt of Gods worde. And this cause God alleageth, both in the lawe and in the Prophetes. And they are here confuted, which say these things growe of the doctrine of the Gospell. For although the godly also feele and taste of these afflictions, yet are they in farre other case than the vntowarde worlde is. For they acknowledge the chastysment and discipline of God the father, they overcome aduersitie by fayth and pacience, and bicause they

can rightly vse aduersitie to the amendement of their lyfe, it cometh to passe for the more part, that they are most prosperously deliuered fro all aduersity by the mercifull hande of God. For God is faythfull, and will not suffer his people to be tempted aboue their strength. And the thinges following will teach vs, howe faithfullye the Lorde provided for his Church in those dayes. And that that we reade came to passe in the yeares after following, is not much vnlike hereto. For Eusebius writeth that in the reygne of Maximinus, who did cruellie persecute the Christians, God sent forth such dearth of victuals, that the rich men & welthy died openly in the strætes, and that they which not long before had caused the Christians to be deuoured of wyld beasts, to satiate their cruell eyes with their miserable death, were openly eaten vp and deuoured of Dogges. And while they miserably perished, the Christians had not onely sufficient to liue by, but also charitably relieved a great many readye to sterue for hunger. These thinges woulde be considered of vs nowe a dayes, where one Claudius alone reigneth not, but drunkennesse beareth swinge in euery place, and so little preuaileth godly admonition, that men rather ioyne vnto their dissolutenesse of lyfe, most wicked contempt, and deadly hatred of Gods worde. And surely there want not also in these dayes examples of Gods iudgements: but we want both eyes and eares to perceyue that, which might serue to our saluation. See Esay. 5. Eccles. 10. Amos. 6. Math. 24.

But let vs see howe God provided for his Church in this dangerous time of calamitie. He raysed vp Prophetes, and some of them he sent from Ierusalem to Antioche, to lighten the late sprong Church of the Gentyles, with the gift of prophetic. Among these, one Agabus, stirred vp by the instinct of the holy ghost, gaue the Christians warning of this famine to ensue, and was the cause that they made prouision aswell for themselves, as other. Here we haue to consider the fatherly goodnesse of God, who being prouoked through our sinnes, to sende punishment: yet first to admonishe vs of the same, both for that all men might see, that nothing cometh to passe in this lyfe by chaunce, and that also when we are admonished, we might conuert and be saued. The which thing he hath so constantly obserued euer since the beginning of the worlde, that the Prophete Amos durst saye: the Lorde God doth no maner of thing, but he telleth his secretes before vnto his seruants the Prophetes. This appeareth in the men of the first age, to whom God sent Noah the preacher of righteousnesse, and graunted them an hundred yeares space to repent in, before he woulde sende the floude to destroy them. He sent Lot also to the Sodomytes, by whose doctrine and example of lyfe, they might be prouoked to amendement. By Ioseph he warned the Egyptians of the dearth to come, whereby he succoured the lyfe of a great manye. He afterwarde prouoked them by Moyse, not onely by wordes, but also by horrible wondrous to doe their dutie. What needeth it to speake of the captiuitie of Babilon, which it is manifest was foreshewed by the Prophetes many yeares or euer it came: And Christ did not only foretell the last destruction of the Jewes, but also Iosephus declareth, that they were warned therof by many wondrous. And though God should neuer call sinners backe by any aduertisements, yet are there generall warnings confirmed with innumerable examples of Gods iudgements, which are sufficient to teach vs, what all they maye trust too, that rashlye transgresse the

1. Cor. 10.

In the ix.
booke of the
Ecclesiastical
histoye viij. ch2. God pro-
uideth for his
Church by
Prophetes.

Amos. 3.

In his. viij.
booke, and. xij
chap. of the
warres of the
Jewes.

lawes of God, and dare without repentance liue dissolutely. See Leuit. 26. Deut. 28. Ierem. 5. Let vs I beseech you, acknowledge this goodnesse of the Lorde in these dayes, least whyle we despyse his faythfull admonitions, he punishe vs the more grievously.

The holpe
ghost is au-
thor of pro-
phetic.

But before we passe from this place, this also is to be considered, that Agabus is sayde by the spirite to signifye this dearth to come. For here is declared the maner and order howe the Prophetes in those dayes vsed to prophetic, least any might thinke they coniectured by the Planets, or else were giuen to the study of other vnlawfull sciences. For the holy ghost was the authoꝝ of their prophecyng, as the Lorde before had promised by Ioc. And Paule reckoneth prophecyng among the gifts of the holy ghost. Therefore the example of Agabus nothing defendeth the deceyuers of our dayes, which being giuen to curious artes, contrary to the prescript word of God, dare prophetic of warres to come, of plentie, of sickeneses, and such lyke things. Whose boldenesse and impietie, I haue before declared to be forbidden by the lawes of God. See the fourth Homelie, and also our Commentaries vpon Micheas, homil 20.

What the
Antiochians
did before the
dearth came.

It remaineth, that we declare what the Christians at Antioch did, after the Prophete had thus admonished them. Where chiefly appeareth their fayth, which was the ground of all their well doing. For by their doings it may easily be gathered y they beleued Agabus prophetic. For they coulde not suspect him, whome they sawe threatned but such things, as the publike corruption of all states and degrees deserued. This is the beginning of saluation, when men can synde in their heartes to beleue the word of God. This thing in time past put away the destruction which god threatned vnto the Ninuities. Contrarywise, it appeareth that diuers men haue bene the occasion of their owne vtter vndoyng, bicause they rather woulde with their hinderance and losse proue the veritie of Gods worde, than beleue it. And our Sauour Christ teacheth this to be the onely cause of the destruction of Ierusalem, that they knewe not the daye of their visitation. So likewise he calleth that the time of grace, when the father of heauen did vouchsafe to admonishe the Jewes of the wrath to come, first by Iohn the Baptist, then by his sonne and the Apostles, and did exhort them to amendment of lyfe, and a newe conuersation. And if we list to apply these things to our dayes, we shall be constrayned to confesse that this is the chiefe cause of our miseries, in that there be so fewe, which vse to beleue the worde of God, and to feare the predictions or warnings of punishment to come.

Luc. 19.

The Antio-
chians pre-
pare them-
selues to pro-
uide for the
poore.

Moreover, after the people of Antiochia had beleued Agabus thus prophecyng, they called to minde the state of their nædye brethren, and weighing with themselves diligently, what a dearth was lyke to be at that time, they prepared themselves to the deedes of Christian charity & deuotion, a thing not vsed of the children of this world. For when they perceyue a dearth like to folow, they apply themselue to their gainful deuises, they heap by corne, and hworde in their Garners to make of a publike calamitie, their priuate lucre and aduantage: yea, by these fellowes subteltyes, it commeth to passe, that they which are in næde are the more distressed with penurie, & the dearth holdes the longer, bicause they still greedily gape after more aduantage. But the Christians at Antioche did farre otherwise, whome Christ did vouchsafe first to haue called after his own name: For their chief

care

care was howe to succour their poore and nēdye brethren. And in this case they thinke their brethren the Jewes to haue most nēde, partly for that they knew their goodes were taken from them (as Paule testifieth Heb. 10.) and partly for that they knewe they were bounde to them, in that they had receyued from them the wholesome doctrine of the Gospell, and knowledge of Christ their sauour. For being godly and wyse people, they did easlye perceyue that it was not without the prouidence of God, that they whose goodes as yet were not consumed, shoulde for this ende be admonished of the dearth to ensue. For after this sort, they thought that god in this publike scarcitie did in their brethrens behalfe, require this dede of charity of them. This is a verie notable example of Christian gratitude, whereby we are taught, what dutie, learners owe to their teachers, seeing the Antiochians, acknowledge themselves to be debtors to all the Jewes, because they had learned the truth of some of the Jewes. For by common reason, they vnderstande that saying of Paule to be most iust, that it is but a small matter, if they reape their temporall goodes, which haue sowed them spirituall goodes. But nowe a dayes we be mooste unkinde, for hauing receyued great profite by the doctrine of the Gospell, men enuy the teachers themselves a necessary liuing, much more their other neighbours and countrie men. Thus they declare they make no great account of the Gospell, when they make so much a doe to paye the Ministers of the Gospell, but their bare stipende and pension.

Howbeit, Luke diligently declareth the order that the Antiochians tooke about this matter. First, euery man of the Disciples purposed to sende succour vnto the brethren which dwelt at Iurie. And where he declareth that thys was the purpose of euery one, he sheweth it was a voluntary benefyte, and not enforced. Such ought they to be which will haue their charitie accepted of God. For as Paule teacheth, the Lorde looueth a cheerefull giuer. It shall much make for the stirring vp of liberalitie in vs, if we consider, that the richer sort owe this seruice and dutie to the poore. Which thing is the cause that Paule reasoning of this matter, vseth so often this word *δικαιονία* which signifyeth the dutie of ministry and dispensation. Wherunto is to be referred that saying of Christ, admonishing vs to make vs friendes of the vniust Mammon, which when we depart hence, maye receyue vs into euerlasting Tabernacles. These done, he sayth, they purposed to sende, euery one according to his abilitye. For God did so moderate our Christian liberalitie, that he woulde no man shoulde be charged aboue his possibilitie. For it is well knowne what Paule sayth: if there be first a willing minde, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that hee hath not. Not that other be set at libertie, and you broughr into combraunce, but that there be egalnesse nowe at this time, and that your abundance may succour their lacke. And we reade that the widdowe that cast but two Mytes into the Corban, was praysed of Christ because she was able to giue no more. And here is the niggishnesse of them greatlye reprovued, which neglect the workes of liberalitie, vnder pretence that they thinke it vniust to bestowe the goodes that they haue gotten with their labour and traueyle vpon other: whereas God requireth nothing of them, more than that they be able to spare. Last of all, they are very circumspect, that their so godly and necessarye a deuise be not by craft and subtiltie hindred or disappoynted. For when they had

1. Cor. 9.

The manner
of contribu-
ting to the
poore.

2. Cor. 9.

Luc. 16.

2. Cor. 8.

Marc. 12.

had gathered this mony, they committed it not at all adventures, to every one to be caried, but to Paule and Barnabas, whose credit they had tryed diuers wayes. And surely to let all this geate passe, it appeareth in Pauls writings, what great truth he bled in this behalfe, and howe carefully he procured the reliefe of his needye brethren in Iurie. See. 1. Corint. 16. 2. Cor. 8. and. 9. and Rom. 15. Moreover, they sende it to the Elders, that it might duely be distributed, according to their discretion. We haue therfore in this place to learne, what Christians haue to doe in times of publyke distresse. And if we compare the proceedings of these dayes herewith, we shall fynde but a fewe tokens of the primitive Church. For a great number conueye awaye the goodes of the Church, and dishonestly make hauock of them, and there are very fewe or none, which of their owne goodes will exercise christian contribution. But there is a great number of them which will abuse publike calamitie to their priuate comoditie. And they that be the best men, will not relieue the neede of y^e poore, before he see him brought to extreame beggery, & be compelled to go from doore to doore. God graunt that we maye be enflamed with true fayth and charitie, that we may by our works be knowne for Christians, at that day, when Christ our Lorde and Sauour shall come to iudgement in the glory of his father: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory, for ener.
Amen.

The.xij. chapter vpon *the Actes of the Apostles.*

The.lxxxij.Homelie.

AT the same time Herode the King stretched forth his handes to vexe certaine of the Congregation. And hee killed Iames the brother of Iohn with the sword. And bicause he sawe that it pleased the Iewes, he proceeded farther, and tooke Peter also. Then were the daies of sweete bread. And when hee had caught him, hee put him in prison also, and deliuered him to fower quaternions of souldiers to be kept, entending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. And Peter was kept in pryson But prayer was made without ceasing of the congregation vnto God for him.



BEfore this, the Euangelist Luke described to vs the persecutions, raysed by the Priests agaynst the congregation, which though they might seeme grievous and horrible: yet the persecution here reported, was much grievouiser. For a king of great power, and one which had the ruling of all the Jewishe Nation, was the beginner and procurer thereof. And whereas till this

this time, the Apostles abode safe and vntouched, nowe hath this wicked Tyrant such power, that by cruell death he maketh awaye one of the chiefe among them. The ende of all this hystorie is, that hereby we should learne the state of the Church, and being myndfull of Christes admonitions, prepare our selues to the like. Notobest, where in these thinges there appeareth alwayes a great dulnesse of our nature, all the circumstances of this place, must be the more diligently considered.

And first Luke completh this present hystorie, with the ende of the Chapter before going, and beginneth his narration or discourse of the tyme. For where he had entreated of the dearth foreshewed by Agabus, he writeth that the same time Herode beganne to persecute the Church. And if you conferre this place with the ende of the Chapter, it shall appeare this was done in the last yeare of Herode, a little before he ended his lyfe at Caesarea, by the horrible iudgement of God. And if we cast the time according to hystories, we shall fynde that this last yeare of Herode fell in the fourth yere of Claudius y^e Emperoz, what time the Hystoriens say that this dearth reigned. There came two most grievous calamities, dearth, and persecution together, eche of which seemed intollerable to the congregation. This state of the Church is to be diligently considered of vs, because God suffreth his Church with so many afflictions to be tryed and exercised. For God which a little before had stirred by the mindes of those at Antiochia and others, to reloue the necessitie of the Jewes with their liberalitie, suffreth now the furious blasts of this wicked king to rise against them. But it is no straunge thing that here commeth to passe. For there are infinit examples of this sort. We reade of Abraham howe when at Gods calling he had forsooke his native Countrie, and was come into the lande of Chanaan, hee was dziven from thence by famine, and inforced to flye into Egypt. Isaac his sonne fynding the like trouble, sustained great want of victuals, among the enuious Nation of the Chanaanites. So we reade that Ioseph hauing lost his libertie, was put in prison, and like also to lose his lyfe. What shall I speake of Iacob his father which was still inbred with troubles and vexation, insomuch that euen in his extreme age, he confessed before Pharao that he had led the moze part of the dayes of his lyfe in trouble and cares. And if a man would consider and weigh the people of Israels estate, as well in Egypt, as in the wilderness, he shall see continuall traueyles, and as it were, freshe floudes of afflictions flowing by course. And that which the Primitive Church nowe proueth, came to passe also in the yeares following. Neyther is there any cause why we shoulde looke for any better in these dayes, than the Oracles of Christ declare shall be about the last days, where we are taught that the Church shall be exercised with famine, plague, wars, & persecutions in all parts. Wherefore it behooueth vs to prepare our selues vnto pacience, that whē these things come to passe, we may consider howe iudgement must beginne at the house of God, and that wee bee iudged of God, to the ende we should not be condemned with the irrepentaunt worlde. Here also is the erroz of them confuted, which iudge of religion and faith, according to the things that fall out in this worlde, as though the Citie of the godly were on earth, whereas the Scripture euerywhere sheweth howe it is prepared for vs in heauen.

Secondly, Luke nameth the authoz of this persecution, and writeth that

1. Persecutis
on regeth in
time of derty

Gene. 12.

Gene. 26.

Gene. 37. 39

Gene. 47.

Math. 24.

Luke. 21.

1. Pet. 4.

1. Cor. 11.

2. Herodes A-

Agrippa is au-
thor of this
persecution.

3 Tetrarchy
is one part of
a kingdome
or prouince
deuided in
four parts.

Plal. 2. &c.

3. The cau-
ses of this
persecution.

1. Schisme.

1. Reg. 13.

that it was Herode. By this place it appeareth that the Kinges of Galiley and Iurie were commonly called Herodes, berily of that famous and great Herode, which being an aliaunt, first obteyned to be king of Iurie. For it is plaine, that this of whome Luke speaketh in this place was Agrippa, Nephewe to this great Herode, by Aristobulus his sonne, whose death Iosephus in all poyntes agreing with Luke, describeth in the .xxix. booke of his antiquities and. vij. Chapter. This Herode was both a moste mightye Prince and a craftie. For after he was let out of prison by Caius Cesar, where Tiberius had put him, bicause of his ouermuch familiaritie with Caius, and was declared king of the Tetrarchies, of Philip and Lysanias, a little after he tooke from Herodes Antipas, his vnckle by the fathers side, and sisters husbande, the kingdome of Galiley, procuring him to be banished by Caius, to whome by his letters he had accused him. And after the decease of Caius Cesar, Claudius being Emperour, he gaue him the Prouinces both of Iurie and Samarie. And thus Agrippa obtayned alinoste the whole kingdome of Herode the great his grandfather. It shall behouue vs diligently to consider the power of this king, that the power of Christ may appeare the greater, which so easily subdued so mighty an enimie. For God would set Christ and his Church together with such an one as this, to shew a singuler example, and to declare that all the power of this worlde is but bayne, if it be compared with Christ. For this Agrippa that in short space, had clymed by prosperous successe, to such heygth of power and dignitie, which had escaped the cruell handes of Tyberius, and marueylously defeated the craftes of Herodes Antipas, as soone as he beganne to encounter with Christ, dyed most miserably, as we shall heare in the ende of the Chapter. The like was sene in Iulian, who where he had bene a most prosperous warryer, sodainly lost both his Emppre and his lyfe, when he begun once to set on Christ, whom he vsed in scoorne to call Galileyan. We haue like examples in our dayes, which we ought diligently to consider, that we be not offended at the power and force of Christes enimies. For he is stronger and of more power that is on our side. And they shall in all ages feeble the yron scepter of Christ, that will not be ruled by his wholesome rede and discipline.

Thirdly, it behoueth vs to search out the causes of this deuised persecution, whereof Luke toucheth the one after a darke sort, but the other he declareth plainely. First he sayth, that Herode stretched out his handes to vex certain of the congregation. And bicause he maketh mention of the Church, which in poyntes of religion had deuised themselues from the residue of the Jewes, it seemeth that Agrippa was incensed against them, as authours of schisme. For tyrants can away with no likelyhoode of schisme be it neuer so little among their subiects, not for that they delight so much in peace, but for y they feare their state, which they know standeth in great hazard throught schisme and discention. Which is the cause that though they be boyde of all religion, yet they seeke to haue in their Realmes an vniforme consent in religion. For the craftie men well knowe, that there is nothing of more efficacie to deuyde the mindes of men, than diuersitie and vnlikenesse of religion. There be examples of both these in the Scriptures. Ieroboam to the intent that the tenne Tribes, ouer whome he had gotten to be king, shoulde not be reconciled agayne to the house of David, deuised newe manners of religion. And Antiochus bicause he woulde stablishe his Emppre,

continuu-

commaunded one forme of religion to be vsed ouer all his Prouinces. In the meane season we haue to note diligently, howe the onely worshippers of truth most commonly are counted for schismatikes, where as yet there are none other people more ledde with the desire of true vnitie, and where as there springeth no ranker encrease of sects, than of superstition. Among the Jewes were the sects of Phariseys, Sadduceys, Essenes, and others of like heare. And yet Agrippa layd hands on none of these. Only y^e Church of Christ, as the mother of deuision suffreth persecution. We haue seen the like euen in our dayes. For who is ignorant of the innumerable & most diuers sectes of Monkes, wherby Christendome now many ages hath bene diuided? But which of the Popes, or Emperors, or kings, hath called them schismatikes, although they both professed a diuers name, and also differed from other men in apparell, rytes, and other ceremonies? Yea, such were defended by the Popes authoritie, and made of kings priue counsailes. But as soone as the right sayth set forth by the sincere doctrine of the Gospel, put by hir head, by and by were hearde euerywhere the horrible names of Heretikes, sectaries, and schismatikes. For where truth only most strongly ouerthroweth the kingdome of Satan, he cannot abyde that they which haue heretofore liued in darknesse, and yeldded them to his gouernement, should embrace hir. In the meane while they crye out and say, peace and tranquillitie is disturbed, and can suffer any thing in their Realmes, rather than the peace of Christ.

The other cause which more prouoked Herode, raging of his owne selfe, Luke plainly expresseth, where he sayeth: Seeing that it pleased the Jewes, he tooke Peter also. This new king therfore thought to picke a thank of the Jewes, who he knew of nature could not awaye with seruitude, and yet bare great hatred vnto Christes religion. In this example are the conditions of tyrants trimly declared, whose propertie it is to establishe their tyrannie with the bloude of harmelesse menne. For the bloude of the poore is not deare in their sight, as the Prophete testifieth of the good king. But they playe for mennes heads, as it were at the dyce, if they thinke any gayne lyke to come by their deathes. So we reade that Augustus sometime purchased Antonius fauour with Cicero his heade. And Pylate bicause he woulde gratifye Herodes Antipas, sent Christ vnto him, and to get the good will of the people of Jewes, adiudged him to dye on the crosse, whose innocencie he had tryed by many argumentes, by this meanes purposing to winne their good willes agayne, whome he had many wayes grievously offended. And there want not lyke examples in these dayes. For they which persecute the doctrine of Christ and his Disciples, to haue the friendship of the Popes & Bishops, doe rightly imitate Agrippa. And that that we reade L. Flaminius did sometyne, beheading a certayne man for his Concubines sake and pleasure, the same noboe a dayes among Princes is a common thing, for the whoore of Babylons sake, not onely to behead and burne, but also to make horrible warres agaynst the professours of Christian doctrine. Here let it comfort vs, that we haue God the reuenger of our cause, who as he destroyed the Jewes burning in deadly hatred against Christ, so hath he after horrible sortes reuenged their vnrightheousnesse, which went about to redeeme the good will of a wicked Nation with the bloude of his saints. They shall fynde the lyke indgement, that at this day dare per-

1. Mach. 1.

q. Desire to
please the
people.

Psal. 72.

4. What Herode did in persecuting the Church.
 1. James is killed with the sword.

Marc. 3.

Math. 5.

Rom. 5.

Rom. 8.

2. Tim. 2.

¶ Peter is apprehended

secure Christ for this most wicked worldes sake. We shall haue more commoditie to speake of these thinges in the ende of the Chapter, where Luke reporteth the horrible ende of Herode.

Fourthly is declared, what this great king attempted and did against the Church of Christ. And there are two wicked deedes of his declared, whereby he hath purchased himselfe a perpetuall ignominie and blot of name. First is his beheading of James the brother of Iohn the Apostle and Evangelist. He was one of the chiefe among the Apostles. For him and Iohn his brother, and Peter, did Christ vse more familiarly than the other, when he took him as a witnesse of the myracle of Iairus daughter raysed agayne, and woulde haue him a beholder of his glorification. He was for his feruent zeale of godlynesse and behemencie of speech, called the sonne of thunder. Yet God by his secret iudgement suffreth one of the chiefe of the number of the Apostles to be killed, and such a worshipper of Christ, to become a praye to a moste cruell tyrant. By which example is evidently declared that tribulations and shamefull deaths are not arguments of Gods wrath, as the wicked vse to say, which thinke it an high poynt of wisdom to iudge of fayth and religion according to the successe thereof. But if we shall beleue them, we shall condemne Abell one of the first true worshippers of God, the Prophets, and all the Apostles, and Iesus Christ the very sonne of God: because it is euident, that all these were circumvented and murdered by the subtiltie of the wicked. Let vs rather harken vnto Christ, saying: Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness sake. For theirs is the kingdome of heauen. Blessed are you when men reuile you and persecute you, and shall falsly saye all maner of euill sayings against you for my sake. Reioyce and be glad, for great is your rewarde in heauen. For so persecuted they the Prophetes which were before you. For the which cause Paule teacheth vs to reioyce in afflictions. For so it becometh we become like to the sonne of God, that when we haue suffered with him, we may also be glorified with him, and reigne with him.

The other heynousnesse of Herode is, that perceyuing his enterpryse lyked the Iewes, and therefore purposing to holde on, he also apprehended Peter. For because he woulde seeme the more terrible to the people, he sette not vpon the rascall comminalltie, but vpon the chiefe. And there was no let in him, but Peter also shoulde by and by haue bene executed: but because it was the dayes of sweete breade, he was through obseruation of the feast prohibited, lest he shoulde by vnhalloving the feast, turne the good will of the Iewes from him, which by all meanes he sought to winne. So the most cruell captife playeth the notable hypocrite, and counterfeyteth a loue vnto religion, hauing long before cast out of his mynde all feeling of God, as in his ende it shall appeare. In the meane while, this is a worke of Gods prouidence, that he vseth his counterfeyte holynesse to deliuer his Apostle by. So knoweth God howe to defeate and disappoynt tyrants enterpryses, euen by those meanes, whereby they thinke chieffest to bring their matters to passe. Marke howe great diligence the tyrant vseth in keeping Peter. For he comitteth him to fower quaternions of souldiours to be kept, he commaunded him to be fettered in chaynes, and to haue two souldiours, one to lye at ech side of him, as afterward we shall see in the story of his deliuerie. But howe many thæues, robbers, murtherers, periurers, blasphemers

blasphemers, and wicked malefactors, I pray you, went in the meane season by and downe Herodas kingdome, without any thing sayde vnto theſſe: and Chriſtes innocent Apoſtle in the meane tyme, is faſt kept, as it were ſome heynous theefe or murderer. But this is it that Chriſt chargeth them with, that were ſent to take him, ſaying: you be come out with ſwordes and ſtaues, as to a murderer. &c. Marke this alſo howe this Apoſtle lyeth faſt bounde in priſon, while other men keepe feaſt, and looketh euery houre to heare ſentence of death, whiles other make mery and frolicke. Let vs with patience followe this example, if it come to paſſe at any time that our feaſt dayes be turned to mourning, eyther by reaſon of ſickneſſe, impriſonment, or other ſuch like aduerſitie. For they keepe not holy day ſo much, that are preſent at ſolemne ceremonies and feaſtes, as they that being comforted with Chriſtes ſpirite, reioyce in him, although they be on euery ſide beſette with troubles.

Howbeit at the laſt, he ſheweth what the congregation did in the meane whyle. The Church in the meane time gaue not hir ſelfe to ydleneſſe and pleaſures, but vnderſtanding Peters caſe to be their owne, made their continuall prayers vnto God for him. This is a token both of thankfullneſſe and fydeltie. For they acknowledge how much beholding they are to Peter, which till this tyme had taught them the doctrine of ſaluation. And they truſt he may be deliuered out of daunger by Gods helpe. This place teacheth what Chriſtians ought to doe, when their brethren be in daunger for Chriſtes quarrell, and for the faythes ſake, verily euen as much as in them lieth, according to y^e vocation that God hath called them vnto. And if any perceyue that they can no maner of way ſuccour them, at leaſt let them by prayer commend their cauſe vnto God. This both the glozy of Chriſt teacheth vs, which we are all bounde to ſet forth, and alſo the rule of charitie, and Chriſtian ſocietie, which looketh and commaundeth vs that we ſhoulde thinke our brethrens troubles our owne. And here vnto belongeth that ſaying of the Apoſtle: Remember them that are in bondes, euen as though you were bounde with them your ſelues. Agayne: Reioyce with them that reioyce, weepe with them that weepe. Be of lyke affection one towarde another. And if a man would compare theſe things with the maners of this worlde, it ſhould eaſily appeare howe colde we be in a matter of moſt importance. The godly Martyrs of Jeſus Chriſt doe euerywhere mourne and grone, not onely in chaynes and priſon, but alſo betwene the tormentors handes in the middle of the fyre. But howe many are there which are any thinge touched with their veration and griefes? Yea, while whole Cities and nations ſtryue for the fayth and for Chriſt, till their bloud be ſhedde: a great many in the meane whyle being giuen to their pleaſures, behold their brethrens ſhipwracke as a paſſetime a farre off out of the hauen. To ſpeake nothing of them that ſaye it is Prieſtes matters, and therefore thynke it is well done, when they are ſo rewarded for their godlyneſſe. Theſe men teſtify that they are not of the body of Chriſt, hauing no feeling or compaſſion with Chriſtes members. In the meane whyle, this place teacheth vs, with what weapons the Church chiefly fygtheth: verily with prayers, wherewith it knoweth that God after a ſort will be wonne & overcome. Therefore they poure out their prayers ſtill vnto God, and in them they fynde preſent helpe againſt the menaces, halters, and ſwordes of tyrants, and againſt all other

Luc. 22.

5. What the congregation did during the perſecution.

Heb. 13.

Roma. 12.

1. Cor. 12.

torments. But hereof shall be intreated in the Sermon following, where it shall appere howe the souldiours watch was overcome, and the prison doores opened at the prayers of the congregation. Let it for this time suffice vs to acknowledge the state and condicion of the Church, which is inbred with continuall troubles. Lette vs prepare and make ready our selfe thereto, that we may possesse our soules in prae, through Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honoꝝ, power, and gloꝝy for euer. Amen.

The.lxxxiiij.Homely.

AND when Herode woulde haue brought him out vnto the people, the same night slept Peter betweene two souldiours bounde with two chaynes, and the keepers before the doore kept the prison. And beholde, the Aungell of the Lorde was there present, and a light shined in the habitation. And he smote Peter on the side, and stirred him vp saying: aryse vp quickly. And his chaynes fell of from his handes. And the Aungell sayde vnto him, gyꝛde thy selfe, and bynde on thy sandales. And so he did. And he sayth vnto him: cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he came out and followed him. And wyft not that it was truth which was done by the Aungell, but thought he had seene a vision. When they were past the first and the seconde watche, they came vnto the yron gate that leadeth vnto the Citie, which opened to them by the owne accord. And they went out and passed through one strete, and forthwith the Aungell departed from him. And when Peter was come to himselfe he sayde: Nowe I knowe of a suretie that the Lorde hath sent his Aungell, and hath deliuered me out of the hands of Herode, and from all the wayting for of the people of the Iewes.

The Euangelist Luke in the description of this present hystorie, compriseth thre things very worthy to be remembꝛed. First he sheweth, as it were in a glasse, the state and condicion of the Church of Christ, which God suffreth to be tryed with diuers troubles & afflictions. Secondly, he teacheth what the dutie of euery Christian is, when the tempest of persecution ariseth, that is to say, that euery one should remember the fellowship which they haue together in Christ, & think that their brethrens case is their owne, & when they can none otherways help them being so afflicted, at the least to make their hartly & continuall praiers to God for them. For this he sayth the congregation did, when Herode did cast Peter in prison. Thirdly, he setteth forth vnto vs, an example of the kindenesse and fauor of God, whereby he teacheth vs, that God hath then most care of his people, when they seeme moste destitute both of Gods helpe and mannes. And in this part maye be perceyued the effect of godly prayers, which the belæuers in those dayes founde in all points agreeable to Gods promises. For the holy Apostle of Christ is myꝛaculously deliuered, and all the power and pollicie of Herode is fayne to giue place to the prayers of the Church, seeing that neyther watch, noꝝ yron chaynes, noꝝ fast locked doores, noꝝ yron barred gates, were able to holde him, whome God woulde deliuer at the intercession of his people. It shall behoue vs diligently to consider this place,

place, because Luke is so diligent in describing 'euery circumstance, that he leaueth out nothing, be it neuer so little, for that euery poynt therof serueth much both for our comfort and instruction.

He beginneth with the time, not so much after the common vsage of Historiographers, as for that it serueth greatly for the better setting forth of Gods benefyte. For he writeth that Peter was set at libertie that nyght, after that Herode had purposed to put him to death. Whereby it appeareth that this deliuey was suspended for certaine dayes, in the which time Peter abode the annoyance of imprisonment, and the congregation continued in feruent prayer, and the Jewes burning in hatred against Christ, lyke gaping Cormorants greedily wayted for so excellent a mannes death. But euen in a moment of time, when the space but of one nyght seemed to lette their expectation, the Lorde egregiously deluded them, and deliuered hys seruant from the sword hanging ouer his necke. Whereby we are taught that God vseth sometime to deferre his helpe, but yet not vtterly to forget and forsake vs, but rather meaneth thereby to trye and proue vs, and to make his benefite seme the more notable, when we see it cometh to passe, beyonde all hope and helpe of man. This was the cause that long agoe he then deliuered the people of Israel when they were constrained to make away their infantes, and to mannes thinking were past all hope of recouering their libertie againe. And he brought them through the middle of the redde sea, when the Egyptians were almost on their backs, and ready to set vpon them. Hereto also is Ezechias to be referred, whom God euen then helped, when Sannacherib was ready (as it seemed) to haue taken the Citie. The vse of all these things is, that we should learne patiently to abide Gods leysure, and to prescribe him no meane or time howe to appoynt his affaires. For although Christ seme sometime to be a slepe in the sterne of the Shippe, yet he vseth in time conuenient to helpe our afflictions, and to calme and cease all stormes and tempestes.

After this, he describeth howe Peter was minded and affected in such a present daunger. And verily if a man consider the common course of the world, it would seme he shoulde haue bene ready to die for feare, seeing by reason of Iames late putting to death, and his straight watching, there was no hope of any better helpe. Therefore what should he doe but crye out and lament his owne state and case? But this glorious souldiour of Christ is set out to vs, to be of a farre other minde. For Luke writeth, that he lay a slepe fast bounde with two chaines, betwene the two souldiours. That this was no token of sloth or sluggishnesse, but rather an argument of true faith and sure confidence, may be gathered hereby, for that we hearde before, when the Apostles were scourged with rods, they went out reioycing and being glad, that they were iudged worthy to suffer for Christes sake. Let vs here compare Herode and Peter together, and it shall easily appeare howe great difference is betwene the wicked and the true worshippers of God. That Herode was carefull and much troubled howe he might handsomely compass his intended persecution against Christ, may hereby appeare, in that he causeth Peter, who had neyther will nor power to doe anye hurt, to be bound with chaines, as it had bene a fierce and sauage beast, and to be kept with souldiers lying at eche syde of him, and before the prison doores, and to haue yron gates to be barred against him. What troubles and berations of minde

1. The time when Peter was deliuered.

Esay.37.

Marc. 4.

2. How Peter was affected in his minde being in prison.

Psal. 2.

Phil. 4.

Iohn. 14.

3. The maner of his deliuerance.

1. The ministerie of an Angel.

1. Cor. 11.

4. A light shyneth.

Iohn. 8. 12.

19. The In-

minde felt he, thinke you, in other thinges, that was so carefull onely for Peters keeping. But in how much better case is Peter, which slepeth soundlye, while the tyrant can take no rest all the night long. And that that is in this example declared, may be applyed to all such as he is. For such is the state of all the wicked, that they procure themselves traueyles and cares, while they thinke to bring their matters to passe, by their owne deuises and strength. And because they haue to doe with Christ, whose invincible power, they feele both in outward affaires, and also in their consciences, euen against their willes: therefore they neuer rest, deuising how to shake of his yoke, and to breake his bridle. See the ymage of these men, painted out by Dauid. And therefore the Lord sayth, the wicked haue no peace, but rage and boyle in minde, like the restlesse sea, Esa. 48. & 57. But the godly, because they hope in the equitie of their cause; repose themselves in the providence of God, whereupon they know that both themselves and all their doings depende, and so expulse all feare and care out of their mindes, & enjoy such peace, as Paule sayth, passeth all vnderstanding. For the nearer distresse and aduersitie approacheth, the more feeling they haue of Gods present spirit, whome Christ hath promised to comfort those that be his. These things we ought to haue still in our remembrance, that being confirmed in consolation of the spirite; we may be able to beare and overcome baliantly all daungers for Christes names sake.

But let vs see the maner of his deliuerance, which is the chieftest part of this place: wherfore Luke bleseth a marueylous diligence in describing it, rehearsing euery thing that came to passe about the same. And first he sayth expresselye, that God vsed the ministerie of an Angel, so that euen here also it maye appeare, howe that is fulfilled which the Scripture promisseth, where it sayth that God hath appoynted and prepared the Angels to serue his elect. But the things pertayning to the explication of this place, may be supplied of that which was said in a like hystory, in p. xxxiii. homily. It shall suffice to adde this one thing, that men ought to haue great consideration of their dignitie, remembring that the Angels are present, and to giue themselves to innocencie and puritie of maners, least they bereaue themselves through their owne default, of so holy a succour and safegarde. Whereunto it seemeth Paule had a respect, when he gaue warning, that if women coulde none otherwise be prouoked to shamefastnesse and comelynesse in their apparell, yet for feare of the Angels which are conuersant among the godly, they shoulde vse it.

After this, it is sayde, a certaine light shyned in the prison, being otherwise darke and horrible, which me thinketh, serued partly for that it might appeare this was an Angel of light, and partlye that Peter myght see what he had to doe. And it is very often scene in Scripture, that good Angels haue appeared in bright and shyning wise, as may be gathered by the storie of the resurrection and ascension of Christ. This place teacheth vs, that Christ is able to lighten and giue effectual comfort to those that be his, euen in the midst of darkenesse, so that he can make those things pleasant and comfortable, that otherwise seeme vnto vs fearefull and horrible. For he is the light of the world, which whosoever followeth, walketh not in darknesse.

Thirldy, an Angel puncheth Peter on the side as he slepeth, waketh him

him, and biddeth him aryse quickly, whereas he once thinketh not of anye maner of deliuerie. This is an argument of the goodnesse of God, which alwaye waketh for vs, that our cruell enimies deuour vs not. And that that here commeth to passe vnto Peter, eche one of vs euery daye fyndeth true, but such is our blindenesse, that we acknowledge not the present goodnesse of God. For it is euident, that Satan lyeth still in wayte to catch vs, & wandreth vp and downe like a roaring Lyon, seeking whome he maye deuour. Now then commeth it to passe, that in our sleepe he destroyeth vs not, when we are not able by prayer to keepe him of, nor to doe or thinke anything for our owne safegard. Can there be here any other reason alleaged, than that we dwell safe vnder the defence of the most highest, and vnder the shadowe of the almighty, as y^e Prophet saith Psal. 91. Wherby we also learne with what diligence we ought at all times to commend our selues vnto the tuition and protection of God. These things may also comfort vs agaynst the terrours of death. For where it appeareth that God taketh care for vs in our sleepe (which is an ymage or counterfeyte of death) we shall thinke that by death we are not excluded from his prouidence. Example whereof Christ setteth out in Lazarus, whome being deade, and lying buried in his graue, he doth boughsafe to call his friende. Which is the cause that the Saintes being ready to giue vp their lyfe, vse to commend themselves vnto God the father, lyke as though they woulde laye themselves downe to sleepe or to rest.

Fourthly, the chaines fell of from Peters hands at the voice of the Aungell, and all things touching his deliuerie, were done without any difficultie. For the souldiours (whether they were through Gods power fast on sleepe, or whether they were amazed with the brightnesse of the Aungell, as we reade came to passe in the resurrection of the Lorde) neyther slay Peter araying himselfe, nor going out: and without any let or stoppe. Peter passeth the first and seconde watch, being ledde by the Aungell. Moreover, the yron gate which alone was able to keepe out and in, all persons, opened of it owne accorde. And the Aungell leaueth not Peter, before he had sette him safe out of all daunger. It pleased God thus by steppes and degrees to set him at libertie, that his benefite might seme the more notable. For otherwise he coulde by some straunge myracle haue set him safe sodeinly in Marias house. Here is the inuincible power of God to be considered, and howe easie a thing it is for him to set his people at libertie, to whom things otherwise inuincible, vse to obeye and giue place. For it hath not onely come to passe in Peters deliuerie, but also at diuers other times, that nature hath bene fayne to yelde vnto Gods pleasure, that a waye of escape might be opened to his elected. For hereto maye be referred the passage through the redde sea, and the deuinding or parting a sunder of the riuer Iordane: Likewise we reade, that the fyre touched not Daniels fellowes, no not so much as their garments or heare, beyonde the course of nature. And the Lyons chose rather to laye aside their naturall fiercenesse, than to hurt the seruant of God contrary to Gods pleasure. Which thing the Ecclesiasticall hystorie reporteth oftentimes to haue come to passe in the Martyrs. Herevnto belongeth the falling of the walles of Iericho, at the blasting of Trumpettes: that the army of the Assyrians, were slaine all in one night, and diuers other examples are to be sene of them that reade eyther prophane or Ecclesiasticall hystories. With these things therefore let vs strength our fayth against the

gell awaketh
him.

Iohn. 11.

114. The im-
pediments of
deliuerie are
easily taken
awaye.

Daniel. 6.

1. Cor. 18.

4. what Peter
doth after he
is deliuered.

Luke. 9.

Psal. 50.

Psal. 107.

2. Tim. 4.

the threates of tyrants. For it is moſte certayne that God is able to deliuer thoſe that be his, out of any daunger, ſo it be his good pleaſure. And if at any time he reſuſe ſo to doe, it is becauſe he knoweth it is ſo needfull for our ſaluation. In the meane ſeaſon he remaineth faythfull, and ſuffreth vs not to be tempted further than we be able to beare.

To conclude, the Euangelist ſheweth what Peter did in all this meane while. Firſt he ſayth that Peter wylde not whether this geare was done of a truth or not. For he thought it was a viſion, ſuch as was ſhewed him before in the hystory of Cornelius. And this is an argument of mans infirmite, wherewith he is ſo encombred, that he cannot perceyue the maniſeſt works of God, ſpecially if they be overſhadowed with any maiesty of God-head. So when Peter ſawe Chriſt glorified in the mount with Moſes and Helias, he vttered certaine buſy ſayings, being ignorant what he ſayd. Yet are they more daungerouſly deceiued, which marke not the maniſeſt iudgements of God, wherby they are prouoked to repentance: which is a thing to common in theſe dayes. In the meane while Peters obedience deſerueth no ſmall prayſe, which though he were ignorant what this thing ment, yet obeyed the Augels admonition, teaching vs by his example, howe we ſhoulde uſe our ſelues to obey fayth, as hath bene oftentimes declared. But when he was come to himſelfe, and perceyued he was at libertie, then he greatly magnified God, the author of ſo great a benefyte. Nowe (ſayth he) I knowe for a ſuretie, that the Lorde hath ſent his Augell, and deliuered mee from the hande of Herode. &c. By which example we are taught that we muſt giue God only, all the thanks for any our deliueries. For although he uſe the miniſtery of angels or men, he muſt yet haue the whole prayſe, which beſeth his creatures onely according to his pleaſure. This thing himſelfe teacheth by the Prophet, ſaying: Call vpon me in the time of trouble: ſo will I heare thee, and thou ſhalt prayſe me. Wherevnto appertayneth this ſaying of Dauid: Let them giue thanks whome the Lorde hath redeemed and deliuered from the hande of the enimie. Therefore Peter truly acknowledgeth God onely to be his reuenger, which thing Paule alſo doth, where he confeſſeth himſelfe to be deliuered from the mouth of the Lion, by Gods power. Wherefore their error is intollerable, which being deliuered out of priſon, from ſickenſſe, or other like kinde of daungers, aſcribe the prayſe of their deliuerie vnto Saintes. Howe much more ought the redeeming of mankinde from the tyrannie of hell, to be aſcribed to God as the onely author? Let vs acknowledge theſe things, O brethren, and with thankfull mindes prayſe God, which hath deliuered vs from the power of darkeneſſe, and hath brought vs vnto the fellowſhip of his kingdome, by his ſonne Jeſus Chriſt: to whome be prayſe, honor, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.lxxxiiij.Homelie.

AND as hee conſidered the thing, he came to the houſe of Marye the mother of one Iohn, whoſe ſurname was Marke, where many were gathered together in prayer. As Peter knocked at the entry doore, a Damſell came forth to harken named Rhoda. And when ſhe knewe Peters voyce, ſhe opened not the entry for gladneſſe, but ranne in, and tolde how Peter ſtoode before

fore

fore the entrie. And they sayd vnto hir thou art madde. But she affirmed that it was euen so. Then sayde they, it is hys Angell. But Peter continued knocking, and when they had opened the doore, and saw him, they were astonied. And when he had beckened to them with the hande, that they might holde their peace, he tolde them by what meanes the Lorde had brought him out of prison. And he sayde, go shewe these things vnto Iames, and to the brethren. And he departed and went into another place. Asloone as it was daye, there was no little adoe among the Souldiours, what was become of Peter. When Herode had sought for him, and founde him not, he examined the keepers, and commaunded them to be caried awaye. And he descended from Iurie to Cæsarea, and there abode.



As the Euangelist Luke by suggestion of the holy spirit, hath described in this Chapter a most grieuous persecution of the Church of Christ, by the example whereof wee are taught what state the Church is in here vpon earth: so lykelike he setteth forth a notable example of the goodnesse and prouidence of God, which defendeth the faythfull in their distresse, and most faithfullly perfourmeth the helpe which long agoone he promised. For as we sawe ete-
wyle, then the Lorde was at hande with Peter the Apostle, when he seemed destitute aswell of Gods helpe as mannes. And he did not onely shew a semblant and token of good will, but bled his inuincible power to deliuer him. For he sent his Angell to vnloose the prison chaynes, he openeth the doores in wonderfull wise, he defeateth the watche of the souldiours, and bringeth Peter out of all daunger, and setteth him at libertie when sentence of death was already giuen agaynst him. And albeit all they that are imprisoned, and in bands for Christes sake, are not deliuered in such wonderfull wise: yet there are generall promises, that all they that giue themselves to Gods seruice, are vnder his protection. For Dauid affirmeth that the eyes of the Lorde are ouer the righteous, and his eares are open vnto their prayers. And the sonne of God testifieth, that he heares of our head be num-
bred. But to let these things passe, as is already sufficiently entreated of, let vs consider this present place, where we are taught what Peter did after he was deliuered out of his bandes and prison, what the exercise of the Church was in the meane season, and howe Herode the tyrant took this iudgement of God.

Peter after he perceyued the Angell gone, and himselfe at libertie, weyghing and expending diligently with himselfe, all thinges that recou-
red in his minde, getteth him to the house of Mary, which by all likelyhode was not farre of, and where he suppoled some of the faythfull were assem-
bled, as the custome was. This Mary was y^e mother of Iohn Marke, which of diuers, both of the olde and later writers, is thought to be Marke the E-
uangelist. Which opinion as it is not altogether certaine, so it appeareth that this Marie was a woman of a rare fayth and godlynesse, euen by this one argument, that while Agrippa did so cruellye persecute the Disciples of Christ, yet would she let them resort to hir house, as to a publike Temple, where they did meete together, and exercise themselves in the worde of God,

Psal. 34.

Math. 10.

i. Peter des-
cend to be tor-
mented in the
Charnell
game.

and in prayers, which he coulde not doe without apparaunt and manifest perill. Here the Lord thought good to teach vs by the example of this weake vessell, howe boldly Christians ought to stande by their tackle, and defende their cause, euen in the middle of daungers and troubles. But when Peter came thither, the doores opened not myraculously, as before, the yron gate did, bicause now there was no neede of any straunge myracle, but he knoweth to haue some body to come open the doore. Peters example is to be well considered of vs which hauing escaped the daunger of death, is desirous aboute all things, to be ioyned to the congregation agayne, agaynst whome yet he knewe the tyraunt still raged. Hereby we be taught what care we ought to haue of Ecclesiasticall vnitie or fellowship, and howe the spirite of Christ scattereth not the faythfull in sunder, but ioyneth them together, as well inwardly as outwardly. And they cannot fynde in their hart, easlye to contemne this coniunction. For as they knowe that all saluation is contayned in Christ alone, so they vnderstand the same is deriued from Christ their head, vpon them which are members of Christ, that is to saye, of the Church. Therefore absurde and pernicious is the errour of them, which when persecution ariseth, forsake the congregation, or else if they once haue bene in daunger, thinke they haue done ynough for their part, and will be ioyned to them no longer, for feare of newe daungers. And thus they alienate themselues from Christ, for whose name sake they abode the first brunt, and whyle they will keepe their bodies out of daunger, destroye their soules.

2. The exercises of the
Primitiue
Church.

Plinie the
yonger in his
Epistle to
Traiane the
Emperour.

See what
the Church
reposed of
these assem-
bles in Ter-
tullians Apo-
logy. cap.

Let vs also see what maner of Christians Peter founde in the house of Mary, Luke comprehendeth a great matter in fewe words, and sayth there were many there gathered together, and praying. And yet it is not to be thought that all the faythfull of the whole Citie were gathered into one house, but it is likely that there were other assembles also in other places, and that in the night season, bicause they might not meete together in the day time. And hereof it seemeth that those meetinges of Christians in the night, and earely in the morning, toke their beginnings. Wherof the prophane writers make mention, not that they thought anye more religion or effect of prayers in one time than another, but for that in the time of persecutions, & lying in wayte of their enemies, they coulde not otherwise scarce come together. Nowe a dayes such kinde of meetinges are of many bitterly condemned, thinking that all men ought to abstaine from them, least the godly might giue some suspition of sedition, or of some other more dishonest misdemeanour. But why doe not these notable comptrollers consider the example of the Primitiue Church, and suffer the brethren that be vnder the crosse, to doe as they did in times passed, seeing both their cases be a like? In the meane whyle we denie not, but that there ought to be had herein great diligence and circumspection. For as it was in tymes passed a great occasion to the enemies of Christ, to rayle and deprave the Christian religion, euen so in the ages following, it was cause of superstition, whyle certaine foolish men thought they might here vpon grounde their Whattens and singing before dape. This place in the meane whyle yet teacheth vs what maner of exercises the Christians shoulde haue at all times, but specially when persecutions are stirring, or any other kinde of publike calamitie. And here ought to be diligent harte had of these holy meetinges. For as

Christ

Christ desireth to haue his to be one: so it becommeth them to testifie publicly, the desire of their vnitie and fellowship. Which thing was cause that in the olde Testament Moses gaue such diligent aduertisement concerning their festiual dayes, in all which the chiefe matter was, the holy conuocation or assembly. And Ioel the Prophet admonishing the people of their dutie, in the time of the Assyrian warres, commaundeth them oftentimes to proclayme an holy assembly. And it is not without a cause that Paule writing to the Corinthians, reasoneth in diuers Chapters, of the good order to be had and vled when the congregation meete together. For he knewe that Christ had adourned such as were gathered together in his name, with a peculiar promise, testifying that he is in the middle of them. And yet shall not those assemblies be allowed, be they neuer so great, except those things be done in them, which God commaundeth. He will haue his worde openly taught. Therefore we must come together to heare it. He will haue vs to praye vnto him. Therefore when we meete, we must ioyne together in prayer, that we maye euen in a troupe together (I will vse Tertullians wordes) compassse and beset God about with prayers. For this kinde of violence is acceptable vnto him, as Christ hath taught vs, by the example of the wyddowe. It is euident that these men obserued both these things. For although Luke make mention in this place but of prayers onely, yet forasmuch as they be ordred according to Gods worde, and take their force of the promises of God, it is not lyke they were slacke herein. Of such assemblies as these, the most auncient writers make plentifull mention. And if we woulde compare these things with the blage of our dayes, it should easily appeare, howe farre we haue swarued from the integritie of the Primitive Church. For it pleased God that these companies shoulde come together in the night time, bicause of perilles on euery side at hande: but we will not come together in the day time, when we maye so doe without anye daunger. And they that come to the Church, doe as they did, whose vanitie and wickednesse Ezechiel accuseth cap. 33. And againe, they that meete in the night time, eyther they strue who shall quasse best, or they playe at the defamed dyce, or else runne vp and downe the streetes with their noyses, in too dissolute a wise. To speake nothing in the meane whyle of those, that if any persecution arysse, turne to cursing and rayling, vsing all vnseemely speach against the harmelesse Ministers, as though the matter touched not the whole congregation, but them alone. And hereof cometh it, that we perceiue such continuall calamities in our days. For why should God spare to strike them, which whilst they are layde on, will not acknowledge his hande, nor turne vnto him, correcting them like a father.

Luke now procedeth in his Oration begunne, and declareth how the faythfull were affected at this sodeine and vnlooked for comming of Peter. And first it appeareth they were somewhat troubled at the knocking at the doore, bicause Rhoda the mayde runneth not forthwith to open the doore, but standeth harkening who it shoulde be that was at the doore. For whereas they were not ignorant howe greatly Herode burned in hatred against the church, there was nothing so sure, but they had some suspicion and feare in it. But Rhoda knowing it was Peter by his voyce, surprised with exceeding ioy, and desirous to be the messenger of such glad some tydings, before she would open the doore, goeth and telleth it within. They which scarce thought

Leuit. 23.

Math. 18.

Tertullian in
his Apology
cap. 39.
Luke. 18.See Tertul-
lian in his Ap-
ology. ca. 39E say. 9.
Amos. 4.3. Howe the
faythful were
affected at
Peters coming

Heb. 2.

The prayers
of the godlye
are not in
vaine.

The apparitions
of angels.

Gen. 28. 32.
2. Reg. 6.

of any such thing, much lesse hoped therefore, fyrst sayde she was madde, and afterwarde hearing that she constantly affirmed it to be true, supposed yet that it was not Peter, but his Aungell that was at the doore, and did counterfeyte his voyce. So a man may see the notable seruants of Christ, betwixt hope, feare, and ioye, standing in a doubt. Hence therefore with the madnesse of the Stopkes, who whyle they teache that a good and perfite man must be voyde of all affections of the mynde, go about to make of men blockes and murtherers. And yet Paule witnesseth that Iesus Christ was subiect to such infirmities, and was many wayes tempted like a very true man, so that he coulde haue compassion on vs. Yet here are two things to be diligently considered, befoze we go any further. The first is for our consolation, where we are taught that the prayers of the godly are so accepted with God, that many times his goodnesse farre excedeth them, by graunting more than they dare presume to aske. For although these people made continuall intercession to him for Peter, yet it appeareth by this place, that they had no hope in his deliuey. They knewe well ynough that nothing was impossible vnto God. But they perceyued not why God woulde saue Peter, seeing he suffered Iames to die so vntoworthy a death. Therefore I suppose they desired God in their prayers, that Peter by his grace might be strengthened in the confession of the truth, and that for Christs sake he might stoutely ouercome the terrors of death. And beyonde all hope, they see Peter by the helpe of God restored to them againe, which was an infallible argument of Gods goodnesse, whereby they were taught that God woulde not suffer his Church to be torne in sunder of Tyrantes, seeing he so faythfully defended the Ministers thereof. There are infynite examples of like kynde, which euery one may euerywhere see that readeth eyther the Scriptures or other writers. And if we woulde but a little diligently marke the iudgements of God, we should see the like fall out in our owne affayres. Let vs learne therefore constantly to hope in the Lorde, and to commit our matters and our selues vnto his care and prouidence. The other thing to be here obserued is, that they suppose it was Peters Aungell that appeared. For the godly people acknowledged what is sayde in the Scriptures, touching the defence and ayde of the Aungels. For no man ought to thinke that they ymagined any superstition, deuoyde of sincere religion. For there are Oracles of Scripture, whereby we are taught that God hath appoynted the Aungels to be the Tutors and Ministers of man, as may be seene Psal. 54. and 91. And we haue examples, whereby it is manifest they haue appeared in visibill forme. Therefore they neyther in fowlish sort, nor wicked, bitered these words at Peters sodeyne comming. Yet are we not ignorant that hereof sprang the common error that the superstitious had, of the two Aungels appointed to euery man: which error we reiect for good considerations, because the Scripture defyneth not for certaine any thing touching the number of Aungels, whether it is one, two, or thre, or whole armies of Aungels that defende one man, as we reade of Iacob and Helisæus. Much lesse thinke we them to be hearde, which saye that the soules of those that be deade, walke by and downe, and appeare. For that opinion repugneth against the doctrine of Christ, and the veritie of our fayth, whereby we are taught that the soules of the godlye passe from death vnto life, and that the

soules

soules of the wicked are carped into hell, and can not returne from thence agayne. See Christ reasoning of these poynts in Ioh. 5. and Luc. 16. Let it be sufficient for vs, that the Angells are the Ministers of God, which vseth them at his pleasure, for the safegarde of his elect, and let vs acknowledge the worthynesse and dignitie of man, which ought to be no small prouocation for vs vnto godlynesse.

Nowe is it time to turne agayne vnto Peter. He becometh with his hande vnto the brethren, being partly surprised with ioye, and partly with amazednesse, to keepe silence, and rehearseth all thing in order as it was done, declaring that God was the onely worker of this benefite. And further, he warneth them to signify these things to the residue of the brethren, but chiefly vnto Iames the sonne of Alphaeus, which the olde writers affirme was Bishop of Ierusalem. Of which commaundement it seemeth there was two causes. For he woulde haue the glory of God hereby the more thankfully spreadde abroad, and his brethren, whome he knew were ladde for his sake, to be quitte of their cares. Therefore Peter by his example teacheth vs, that we must not hide the benefytes of God in vnthankfull and unkinde hearts. For then Gods benefytes are best declared, when others prouoked by our meanes, learne to hope in God, and to call vpon him in their distresse, as their defender and reuenger. Dauid being deliuered out of the handes of the Philistynes, maketh mention hereof in the beginning of the Psalme xxxiii.

Further, it is declared that Peter went to another place. For he easily perceyued that he should doe no good to remaine in Herodes kingdome. And the present benefyte of his deliuey, did sufficiently declare, that God would not haue him dye vnder the hande of Herode, but to execute his Apostleship otherwheres. Therefore he vseth the counsell of Christ, saying: If they persecute you in one citie, flye vnto another. Here hast thou therfore what answer to make vnto those, which woulde haue the Ministers of the worde put into the wolues handes, and say that they truly followe the Apostles, when without hope of doing any good, they suffer the wicked, not onely to condemne their doctrine, and the truth of Christ, but also themselves. But it easily appeareth what causeth these men thus to say. They woulde haue all the Ministers of the Gospell gone at once, that Antichristes superstition might be brought in agayne. Wherefore we must vse the wisdom of serpents against these men, according as Christ hath commaunded vs, that through our temerity & rashnesse, we do not indammage Christs quarrell.

Nowe remayneth the last part of this place, whereby we are taught how Herode was affected in minde at this worke and myracle of God. And first after it was knowne that Peter had escaped his bandes and imprisonment, there arose a great feare & trouble among the souldiours. For where they were well acquainted with the fierce nature of Herode, they looked for no goodnesse at his hande. And they were not beguiled. For where Herode had appoynted to put Peter to death, and vnderstode afterwarde that he was escaped, like one beside himselfe, he commaundeth the keepers to be racked, insomuch that although he heard they were in no fault, yet he commaundeth them to be had to prison, or else (which is the liker) to their deaths. This is a very notable example whereby we are taught that the wicked were the worse and not better by the iudgements of God. For where they

are

Peter will
haue Gods
benefite to be
declared.

Peter prouo-
deth for him-
selfe by flying

Math. 10.

4. Howe He-
rode took the
myracle of
God.

Math. 28.

Psalm. 7.

Psalm. 105.
Zach. 2.

are so bolde to strine agaynst God, through his iust iudgement they are so blinded and hardened, that in the open light they are not able to see, nor to submit themselves vnder the mightie hande of God. And there is no cause why we should hope for any better of the tyrants of these dayes, which haue begun to make warre agaynst God, & maintaine the same with such deadly hatred. Here appeareth also an example of Gods prouidence, whereby Herodes craft is deluded, while he heareth the worke of God sette forth by them, whose helpe he accustomed to vse agaynst God. And that example is not vnlike hereunto, where the souldiours appointed by y^e Priests to watch the sepulchre of Christ, were the first that published his resurrection abroad in the Citie. Furthermore, the vnprosperous ende of these souldiours teach vs, what they may looke for which serue tyrantes turnes agaynst the truth. They fall commonly into the pit which they digged for other. And they fynd them to be their enemies, whose good will they go about to get, by killing the godly. Whereby it commeth to passe, that although men doe them no iniurie, yet are they punished by the iust iudgement of God, bicause they had liefer please men than God. Let such as eyther themselves doe any thing agaynst the faithfull of Christ, for mennes sakes, or else suffer other to doe, beare this well in minde. It is Christes saying: Touch not myne annoynted. And he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye. These sayinges threaten present destruction to the persecutours of the Church. Therefore they that will be taken for the sincere louers of true fapth, lette them abstaine from these mennes company and counsell, least they perishe with them. In the meane season let vs acknowledge the power of Christ our king and sauour, which so luckily deludeth the enterprises of his enemies, and so valiantly defendeth his chosen. To him be all prayse, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The lxxxv. Homelie.

HERODE was displeased with them of Tyre and Sydon. But they came all with one accord, & made intercession vnto Blastus the kings chamberlaine, and desired peace, bicause their Countie was nourished by the Kings prouision. And vpon a daye appoynted, Herode arayed him in royall apparell, and set him in his seate, and made an Oration vnto them. And the people gaue a shewte, saying: It is the voyce of a God and not of a man. And immediatly the Aungell of the Lorde smote him, bicause he gaue not God the honour, and he was eaten of wormes, and gaue vppe the ghost. And the worde of God grewe and multiplied. And Barnabas and Paule returned from Ierusalem to Antioch when they had fulfilled their office, and tooke with them Iohn whose surname was Marke.



Although God suffreth his Church to be exercised and tryed with continuall persecutions: yet he appointeth for the persecutours thereof grievous and horrible punishments. For in the Prophet Zacharie he is compared to a weightie stone, wherewith euery one bleseth to trye maiesties, and to proue his strength. But none escapeth scot-free or without some hurt. Hereof is set forth vnto vs a notable example

in Herodes Agrippa, who as was declared in the beginning of this Chapter, entended and begunne a grievous persecution against the Church, both for that he would not have the people of his iurisdiction deuided in diuers religions, and also for that he ment thereby to get the fauour and good will of the Iewes. And at the fyrst his enterpryse seemed luckilye to succæde. For where he had set on two of the chiefe Apostles, he put Iames vnto death, and Peter he tooke and layde in prons, appoynting sirtene souldiours to watch him. At which time how greatly all mennes mindes were amazed, and stricken with feare, their continuall prayers testifye. But euen in a moment when all things seemed past hope, Christ declareth himselfe to be the protector of his Church. And fyrst of all he deliuereth Peter in wonderous wise. Next, he causeth the punishment to light on the souldiours, that they ment vnto Peter. And bicause none should thinke that Herode should alway prosper, God catcheth him also with an horrible reuenge, the which Luke now in this place diligently describeth.

He beginneth with rehearfall of a newe hystory, which moze manifestly yet sheweth the nature of Herode, that hereby we may the better knowe the cause of so grievous a punishment. The summe and chiefe poynt hereof is, that he had conceyued in his minde displeasure against those of Tyre and Sidon, whom when he had compelled through publike necessitie, that is say, by famine, humbly to sue for peace, waring hereby the provoder, he did hasten the vengeance of God. And although Luke declareth not the causes of his enmitie, yet is it not harde to perceyue what they were. For it seldome cometh to passe, that Monarches and fre Cities agree together in one, bicause they take against their ambition and licentiousnesse, and by their example allure kings subiects to the desire of libertie. Furthermore, it is credible that the Tyrians and Sydonians dyd not well like of Agrippa his pryde, as being an bystart, and aduanced to such great power by Caligula and Claudius, and but newly come out of prison. And peradventure their great riches and power by the sea, which they had many yeares gotten by their merchaundise, encouraged them and set them the moze a gogge. For that they were hereof the provoder, appeareth by the writings of the Prophetes. See Esay. 23. Ezech. 26. 27. and 28. And it may be that the crafty tyrant coked this lurking hatred in his minde, vntill penurie and dearth of victuals gaue him occasion to stirre against them. They againe perceyuing that their Cities coulde from none other place be so commodiously maintained as by nighnesse of Herodes kingdome, and that therefore his friendship was necessary, became humble suiters vnto him, and that they might obtayne peace the sower at his hands, they make Blastus of his priue chamber their friende, which thing could not be compassed without many bribes and rewardes.

In these thinges the holy Ghost hath set out vnto vs to beholde as in a glasse the condicions of tyrantes. For as Herode is not here content with the wyde boundes of his kingdome, but desireth to haue the borderers also vnder his obeyssaunce: so if the insatiable desire of the fleshe be not bydded in the hearts of Princes, there is none so large and wide a kingdome, that can content their minde, or suffyse their ambition. For as couetous men heape and masse by mony, and ioyne house vnto house, and fyelde vnto fyelde with all grædye desire: so Kinges labour to ioyne Realme vnto

Herode is offended with those that border vpon him.

The condicions of Tyrants.

Realme,

Realme, and still to extend their power over them that border vpon them: little regarding in the meane season how they may prudently gouerne those people which God hath giuen them the rule of. And this is the cause of continuall warres, whereby the miserable subiectes are wasted and consumed, who fynde them that ought to be as shepheardes and fathers vnto them, to be their destroyers. Againe, where kings puffed vp with insatiable ambition, desire to haue all men in subiection vnder them, their selues most commonly are ruled by vile slaues, which by craft can creepe into their bosomes, and knowe well ynough how to vse their foolishnesse and blockheadnesse, to their owne aduantage. Of which kinde of men, it appeareth this Blastus was, vpon whome this one place easily declareth, the whole rule of y^e realme depended. So with some Emperours we reade that such were of most authoritie about them, as they of bondmen and villaines had made free, to saye nothing of those, which were ledde and ruled by players, testers, harlots, and abused yong Springalles. And hereof it hath come to passe, that they which haue had any thing to doe with great Princes, haue bene compelled to become suiters to most wicked menne. For vnlesse they had made them their friendes, they should neuer haue bene able to come to the speach of the Prince. And forbicause they gaped after money, wherby to maintaine their coueted dignitie, it came to passe, that in kinges Courtes, all things went for money, and according to the Poetes saying: there was most right where most money was stirring. These things are sayde, to thende that Princes may vnderstande what vices they had neede to be ware of, and that all men may acknowledge the goodnesse of God, which so diligently dissuaded his people from a king, as we reade in the first booke of Samuel cap. 8. And those to whome God hath giuen to liue in libertie, maye learne to make much of such a benefyte, & worthily to vse it, least losing it, and coming to be subiect to the pleasure of burly men, they then desire in vaine, with carefull sighes and grones, their libertie once lost. Further more, here is to be obserued what good successe Herode hath, after his persecuting of the Church, and embruing himselfe with the bloude of the guiltlesse saints. And yet was he worthy, eyther to haue bene destroyed with a thunderbolt from heauen, or else to haue lost his kingdome, and wander by and doونه like a begger. And beholde, moste riche Cities of their owne accorde, fall doونه at his faete, and are glad to receyue such condicions of peace as he prescribeth. This is that thing that offendeth those that are weake in faith, bicause they see the wicked so prosper, and feele none of the plagues or punishments that other men doe, as the Prophete sayth, Psal. 73. And therefore Ieremie crieth out: Howe commeth it that the waye of the vngodlye is so prosperous, and that it goeth so well with them which without any shame offende, and liue in wickednesse. Further more, the wicked take occasion hereof to gather, that all studie and endeouour of true religion, is superfluous & vnprofytable, as we maye see in Malachie. 2. and. 3. Chapter. But we must here remember that the wicked are euen then ruled with the becke of Gods prouidence, when things seme moste to succede with them against the Oracles of God. For it commeth to passe by the iust iudgement of God, that being drunken with this good successe, they are lifted the higher, to the intent they may fall the lower. Wherevnto Salomon had a respect when he sayde: Presumptuousnesse goeth before destruction, and after a prowde stomacke there followeth

The successe
of the wicked
is a preamble
of ruine.

Ierem. 12.

Prou. 16.

followeth fall. And David teaching vs howe the glozpe and felicitie of the wicked is but transitorie, sayth: I my selfe haue seene the vngodlye in great power and flourishing like a greene Baye tree. And I went by, and loe hee was gone: I sought him but his place coulde nowhere be founde. Therefore it is a folly to be offended at the prosperitie of the wicked, considering it is the chiefe cause of their destruction, because they vse it insolently against God, as may be gathered of the successe of this present businesse, that Luke nowe rehearseth.

For Herode seeing all thinges succede after his desire, being drunken with the fauour of fortune, began to aspire to diuine honoz also, as it shall more evidently apperue, if you will conferre the things that Iosephus writeth in the .xii. booke of his antiquities, and seauenty Chapter with Luke. For he writeth that he had appoynted games or playes in the honoz of Caesar, and that vpon a daye assigned for that purpose, he sate in his throne, hauing on a Princely robe, women throughout with strokes of siluer, meaning openly to make an Oracion vnto the people. And where the garment by reason of the Sunne beames rysing vpon it, glittered and shined in his face, the flattering Courtiers tooke occasion thereof to magnifye him as God, and all the people followed their example. First therefore they begin to crye, the voyce of a God, and not of a man. And forthwith turning them to prayers and supplications, they saye: Be mercifull vnto vs. For although we haue hitherto feared thee but as a man, yet now we see thou art of an higher nature. &c. It seemeth that these things are for this cause chiefly intermedled with this hystorie, that we maye beholde the vanitie of all the people, wherewith they were so infected, that they deserued so to be oppressed and pinched vnder so vile a tyrant. For why shoulde God giue them a better Prince, which were not ashamed so to extoll a foltie and wicked man with godly honoz? But the like vanitie reigneth euerywhere in these dayes, considering we see most cruell tyrants giuen wholly to beastly pleasures, being almost loden with like ambitious and godly styles and tytles. For it is not now sufficient to call them benefyciall or conquerors, but they must be called most victorizous, and haue these diuine names of Grace and Maiestie, which by Scripture are due vnto God, onely so often repeated, till a man woulde lothe it. And because the Courtiers first beginne, and the rascall people not onely followe them, but also imitate the seruile and flauishe condicions of their teachers: we are worthy that by open tyrannie of Princes, and their manifest wickednesse, we shoulde to our great losse and dammage be reprobued as lyers. Lette those moste ambitious men well remember this geare, which abuse the foolishnesse of such seruile people, to the ende to be taken for ioly fellowes, by such counterfeyte and vaine titles. For by this meane they declare themselues to be the companions both of Herode and Caligula, and Domitian, and other such like, and therefore with them God shall punish them, as Herode here proued.

For streightway the Angell of the Lorde smote him, which Eusebius out of Iosephus writeth, appeared to him in visibill wise. Of the which stroke he by and by beganne to be tormented with pangues & gypes of the belly, which extorted some confession of truth out of his heart, though otherwise so ambitious. For he turned him to them that wayted on him, and sayde: Beholde I your God, must nowe exchange lyfe for death. And I whome you

Psalm. 37.

Herode desired to be honoured as a God.

The destruction of Herode.

Eusebius in the .1. booke of the Ecclesiasticall storie. x. chap.

A disease
which maye
well be called
the lowlye es-
till. by reason
of lyce which
encrease so
mightily, that
they devour
and eat vp
the bodye.

1. Pet. 5.

The enlarge-
ment of
Christes
kingdome.

called immortall, am now ledd away vnto death. But Luke declaring the kinde of his death, sayth: he being eaten and gnawen with wormes, gaue vp his ghost. It seemeth therefore he dyed of the disease called Phthiriasis, hauing wormes or lyce breeding in his fleshe, which fedde vpon him whyle he liued, with great griefe and tythynesse, and at length were the cause of his death. Moreover, Luke assigneth this to be the onely cause hereof, for that he gaue not God the glory. For first he thought the honour of his kingdome, came not of God, but of Caesar, whome for that cause he worshipped with adorning shewes and games in the honoz of him. After that he went about cruelly to persecute the true religion of God. Last of all, he reioyced in the blasphemous wordes of flatterers, whome it had behoued him to haue detested and abhorred. Let them therefore learne by this example, what to looke for at Gods hande, which with lyke impietie set vp themselues against him. It behoueth vs chiefly to note how mightily God reuengeth pride, seeing he doth not onely punishe the proude grievously, but also shamefully, the more to tame and pull downe their haultie heartes and courages. So it pleased him that Pharao shoulde not dye valiantly in the fye, but be drowned in the wanes of the redde sea, which is a shamefull kynde of death. So he slewe Sanherib miserably in the Church of his owne God, by his owne sonnes. And with the same disease which is here described, befoze that, was Antiochus, Herode the great, Sylla, and at length Maximinian the persecutor, vgly consumed. Peter therefore sayd most truly, that God resisteth the proude. Let all degrees and states of men hereby learne to keepe themselves within the bounds of their vocation, and if they perceine any thing in themselves singuler or excellent, to acknowledge that it cometh altogether of the goodnesse of God. So shall it come to passe, that humbling themselves vnder the mightye hande of God, they shall vse his gistes as they ought to doe. Furthermore, this place teacheth vs, what hurt flatterers procure vnto Princes. For of nature we be selfelouers, and like best our owne doings and sayings. Then if we admit flatterers, we become starke blinde, so that we see not manifest vices, & grow to be such as cannot abide to heare the truth, or to be admonished. Which thing hath bene the cause that great Realmes haue bene ouerthrowne by the tongues of flatterers, as hystories declare. And surely Herode had bene most prosperous, if he had giuen eare rather to the Apostles, reprehending his vice, than to the boyces of flatterers and clowbacks. For they caused him being swollen in a wicked and proude contempt of God, to be destroyed with horrible death.

ouer all this, hauing shewed the ende of the tyraunt, Luke returneth to the story of the Church, which he begonne howe the Gospell did spreade, to declare that by Herode it was nothing hindered. For the worde of God (sayth he) encreased and was multiplied, spreading it selfe euery daye farther abroad. This he will declare in the thinges following, wherevnto he maketh a digression touching Paule and Barnabas returne from Ierusalem. For we hearde about the ende of the eleauenth Chapter, howe they were sent thither to cary that mony that was here and there gathered to the poore and needy brethren in Iurie, pinched with dearth and famine. Which businesse after they had faithfully discharged, they return vnto Antioch, from whence shortly after they departed with Marke, whom they brought with them, and

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published the Gospell both farre and neare. This is very comfortable, that we see the Church stande fast and suruiue all hir enimies, and all tyrantes. For she is bozne and conserued by the worde of God, which endureth for euer. This thing the hystories of all times and nations teach vs. For miserably and spittily died Pharao, the Chanaanites, Sanherib, the Babylonians, Antiochus, the three Herodes, Nero, Domitian, Traiane, Antonye, Seuerus, the Maximint, Decius, Valerianus, Aurelianus, Dioclesianus, the two Maximinians, Licinius, Maxentius, Iulian, and as many as euer after all these, durst to set vpon Christes Church. For she flourisheth and liueth, and shall for euer liue, vnder hir trusty and most victorious defender and reuenger, Jesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glorie, for euer. Amen.

1. Pet. 1.

The.xiiij. chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The.lxxxvj.Homelie.

THERE were in the congregation that is at Antioch certayne Prophets and Teachers, as Barnabas and Simon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manahen, Herode the Tetrarches nursefellowe, and Saule. As they ministred to the Lorde and fasted, the holy ghost sayde: Seperate me Barnabas and Saule for the worke wherevnto I haue called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and layde their handes on them, they let them goe. And they after they were sent forth of the holy ghost, departed vnto Seleucia, and from thence they sayled to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamine, they shewed the worde of God in the Sinagoge of the Iewes, and they had Iohn to their Minister.



The Euangelist Luke now in the two Chapters following, describeth howe the doctrine of the Gospell by the ministerie of Paule and Barnabas, began with full course to be preached indifferentlye to all Nations. For where the Iewes onely vntill this time (as hath oftentimes bene declared) challenged to them the name of the Church, and people of God, and the benefyte of redemption purchased by Christ, seemed to appertain but vnto them alone, and that that hath bene sayde of Cornelius the

Centurion, and of the Antiochians, might same came to passe of some special privilege or favour. Therefore that no doubt might remaine, the doctrine of saluation is now carved indifferently vnto diuers Nations, and those thinges are openly accomplished, which the Prophetes long before prophesied of the calling of the Gentyles. But least any one shoulde thinke that Paule and Barnabas did in this businesse ought of their owne heade and presumption. Luke beginneth this hystorie with their calling and sending: the chiefe scope wherof is, that the kingdome of God, and the whole matter of saluation, was transferred & brought to the gentiles, not by mans deuise, but by the appointment & commaundement of God, and that the Gentyles appertayned no lesse vnto y church of God, than the belouing Jewes. And that it was needefull to haue this matter so diligently declared, shall appere by that contention, which hereafter is described in the .xv. Chapter. Yea, we maye see in the Epistles of Paule, that the Jewes oftentimes withstode the saluation of the Gentyles, & stode in doubt of it. And the Jewes were for no cause so much offended with Paule, as for that he made the vncircumcised Gentiles all one with the Jewes in Christ, whiche they thought was not without the notozious iniurie and prophane contempt both of the lawe of Moses, and also of the people of the Jewes, which thing also was cause that euerywhere he vsed such earnestnesse in defending his vocation, who could well ynough haue borne the contempt of his owne name, but that he sawe the glory of God, and saluation of the Gentyles indaungered thereby. But to come to the treatie of this present place, fyrst Luke describeth the Church at Antioch, from whence Paule and Barnabas were sent to preach the Gospel to the Gentyles. Then declareth he their vocation and sending, with the circumstances thereof. Last of all, he sheweth howe they vsed themselves in the office committed vnto them.

1. The commendation of the Church at Antioch.

Prophets.

Pastours.

He fyrst describeth the Church of Antioch not without a cause. For herof it may be gathered, that they coulde rashlye or dayne or appoynt nothing, hauing the spirite so abundantly among them. Neyther can Paule and Barnabas be accused, as to haue left that Church destitute of their ministerie, considering it was so well sene vnto after they were gone. For there were among them certaine Prophetes and teachers. They are called Prophetes which either by instinct of y holy ghost shew of thinges to come, as we see before, Agabus the Prophete did, or else which haue the gift truly & rightly to expound the writings of the Prophetes: in which sense Paule vseth this word Prophete, in his fyrst Epistle to the Corinthians. 14 Chap. Both these senses is well agreeing in this present place. For by hystories it is playne, that the gift of prophesying endured many yeares in the primitive Church. And it can not be sayde that so notable a Church wanted exposition of Scriptures. And they are called Teachers, which openly instruct the Congregation, and applye the holy Scriptures duly to all mennes information, whome we now a dayes call Pastours, or Ministers of the worde. There was therefore at Antioch, not onely a Church, such as is euerywhere, but also a College or schole, out of which was taken learned Ministers, to be sent to other Cities. This place teacheth vs, that the chiefe ornament and beautie of the Church, yea, all the preservation thereof consisteth in this, that it be furnished and provided of fyr Ministers and Teachers. For by the ministry of them Paule plainly teacheth, that through the worde of God

Churches

Churches are begotten, builded up, and preserved. For how shall they be-
 lieue in him (sayth he) of whom they haue not hearde: howe shall they heare
 without a Preacher. **Agayne:** In Christ Iesu haue I begotten you through the
 Gospell. **Hereto chiefly it appertaineth where he writeth that** Christ hath
 giuen some Apostles, some Prophetes, some Euangelistes, some shepheardes,
 and Teachers, to the edifying of the Saintes, euen to the edifying of the body of
 Christ. **And because it is euident that the gift of teaching is not giuen to all**
men in myraculous wise, as it was once to the Apostles, therefore it is
needfull to haue schooles, where such may be brought vpp, as shall after-
warde serue in the Ministerie. Such were wont to be among the Jewes,
 in the Cities of the Leuites, and it appeareth by the storie of Samuel and
 Heliseus, that those singuler Prophetes of God, had a speciall care of these
 schooles. Yea, Amos the Prophete most sharply reprehendeth those that did
 vse to corrupt the Nazarites, and the yong menne giuen to the studie of the
 Scriptures, with wyne. This did great kings and Emperours foresce in
 the Primitive Church, which did erect Colleges of their owne costes, least
 at any time want of teachers might preiudice Gods religion. Howbeit,
 nowe a dayes eyther slothfull Drones dwell in them, or else they be at the
 appoyntment of such proude men, as hunt rather for ambitious names,
 than studie for the edification of the Church.

Moreover, for that the notable Ministers of Christes Church should
 not be defrauded of their due prayse, the holpe ghost woulde haue their na-
 mes recorded for a perpetuall remembraunce, that it might euidently ap-
 peare, that God regardeth those which doe saythfullye serue and studie for
 his Church. And among these persons **Manacn** seemeth to be the chiefe, who
 Luke writeth was fostered and brought up with Herode the Tetrarch of a
 childe. He was therefore a Courtier, and of a noble stocke. For who will
 thinke that one of a base stocke shoulde be appoynted a playfellow with a
 kings sonne, or that Herode woulde afterwarde despyse him, that had bene
 brought up with him from his childehoode. This is a notable example of
 the goodnesse of God, which bleseth in all states of men to haue his chosen,
 and to call them when it seemeth him good. For that vniuersall spirite and
 author of eternall life, bloweth where it pleaseth him. So we reade that
 Naaman was in the Court of the king of Syria. And in Babilon, Daniel and
 his fellowes helde fast Gods true religion, yea, Paule maketh mention of
 some in the house of Nero that belaeued. And Nichodemus is a Disciple
 among the Scribes, the greatest enemies of Christ. There is also in
 Manacn set out vnto vs an example of fayth and sincere religion, who fol-
 lowing the example of Moses, chose rather to be afflicted with the people of
 God, than to enioy the pleasures of sinne for a season, thinking the rebuke
 of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Herode. And surely if a man
 woulde compare the state of the Church, as it was in those dayes, with the
 life of the Court, he shall fynde a marueylous working of the holy ghost in
 this Manacn, and euident tokens both of true regeneration and mortifica-
 tion, and forsaking of himselfe. But that we heare that he did, it becometh
 vs to imitate. For it cannot be that they can truely take holde of Christ,
 which haue not yet learned to despyse and treade vnder fote this worlde,
 with the honors, riches, and pleasures thereof.

But let vs come to the seconde part of this diuision, wherein the sen-
 ding

Roma. 10.

1. Cor. 4.

Ephes. 4.

Amos. 2.

Manacn a no-
ble man and
a Courtier.

Phil. 2.

Heb. 11.

1. Paule and

Barnabas are
sent to the
Gentyles.

Rom. 13.
Heb. 1.

The order of
Ecclesiastical
ministry.

Rom. 10.

ding of Paule & Barnabas to the Gentyles is described. Here are two things chiefly to be discussed, videlicet, the holy ghost the author and moderator of all this businesse, and then the order that Luke writeth they obserued. First, he expressely teacheth, that the holy ghost was the author of all this doing. For as they ministred to the Lorde and fasted, the holy ghost sayde: separte me Barnabas and Saule for the worke wherevnto I haue called them. And it is no doubt but these things are spoken of the holy ghost, forasmuch as mention is made of holy ministerie and fasting. Here the Papistes playe the fooles, following Erasmus his translation, and because he as vnaptly translated the Greeke worde by this worde sacrifice, they expounde this place of the sacrifice of the Masse. Howbeit, the Greekes saye, they doe *leitourgyen*, which are occupied or busied in publike office or affaires, as it may appere where Paule calleth Magistrates and Iungels *leitourges*, not for that they bled to do sacrifice, but for that they are Gods publike officers & ministers. And where by Christes death it is manifest the Leuiticall sacrifices are abolished, & that the seruice of Christ consisteth not in outward ceremonies, but in the spirite and in truth, therefore here can be vnderstanded none other ministry, than such as Christ woulde haue bled in his Church. This comprehendeth in it, the preaching of the worde, publike prayer, and the sacraments which are not sacrifices, but holpe actions instituted to keepe in memorie the sacrifice which Christ once offered vpon the aultar of the Crosse. And herein were they busily occupied, when the holy ghost admonished them to sende forth Paule and Barnabas. For that they were earnestly occupied herein, the mention made of fasting abundantly proueth. There are in this part many things which proue the vocation of the Gentyles, to be the worke of God. For as they were ministring to the Lorde, the spirite aduertised the congregation thereof. Afterwarde, separte mee (sayeth he) Paule and Barnabas. Then they were in the ministerie or seruice of God when they preached vnto the Gentyles. Besides he sayeth, for the worke wherevnto I haue called them. These thinges make for the assuring of our saluation against the insolent bragging of the Jewes, which saye they are onely the people of God, and hereout may be taken arguments, whereby Christ may be proued to appertaine vnto vs also, if any mennes consciences incline vnto desperation.

Here ought we to consider the order of ministry, whereof this place teacheth vs to iudge. The author hereof is the holy ghost, as hereafter also shall appere in the. xx. Chapter. For as by the spirite, the dignitie of Ministers appeareth: so it is plainly manifest, that they are not to be taken for lawfull Ministers, vnlesse they be called by the spirite. For howe shall they preach except they be sent? Which is the cause that aswell the Prophets as the Apostles so often and so constantly inculcate and defende their vocation. Yet let no man alwayes looke for a voyce to come from heauen, to call men vnto the Ministerie. For we must iudge them called of God, that are furnished with necessary giftes of the holy ghost, and chosen by the lawfull voyce of the congregation. For that the Church hath herein hir voyce and election, appeareth plainly by this place. For although the holy ghost doth expressely confesse, that he called these two, and Paule testifieth, that he was appointed from his mothers wombe for the ministry: yet the holy ghost requireth the allowance of the Church. And I thinke that it is requisite

quillite chiefly for this cause, that hereby the Ministry might haue the more credit and authoritie, because the holy ghost knewe it to be a thing subiect to the reproch of a great many. In the meane season we are taught, that order is necessarie in the Church, as well in all other things; as chiefly in the choosing of Ministers, least any man (as the Apostle sayeth) shoulde take vnto himselfe honour. For howe much such things displease God, we learne by the example of Corah, and by the histories of manye ages, whereby it may be proued, that there hath risen in the church scarce of any thing greater troubles, than of the disordinate and vnlawfull choosing of Ministers. Furthermore, as the electing of Ministers in some part belongeth vnto the Church: so it becometh the Church to vse all holynesse in a matter of so great weight and importance. Whereupon they are sayde here agayne to haue fasted and prayed. Howbeit, they coulde not erre in the persons, forasmuch as the holy ghost had named them that were appointed for this present businesse: yet they pray, that they may be increased with the holie spirit, forasmuch as they hearde they were called to an office of such labour and perill. Woulde God those men woulde weigh these things, that vse to choose Ministers among their cuppes, and in a matter of most weyght, vse their affections, which are the worst Counsaylers that can be, whose wickednesse we may thanke for the most part of the euils that are sene at these dayes in the Church. Also these Antiochians adde vnto their prayers the solemn ceremonye of laying on of handes, which we declared heretofore was an outward signe of consecration, where we spake of the institution of Deacons.

Nowe remaineth the last part of this diuision, that is, howe Paule and Barnabas began to discharge the office committed to them by God and the congregation. This part Luke so ioyneeth vnto the premises, that it appeareth they forthwith toke their iourney from thence. This is a notable example of godly industrie and zeale. For what excuses they might haue layde for themselves, all men may easily vnderstande, that haue but lightly run ouer the stories of that time. The Romaines at that time were Lords almost of the whole worlde, who they knewe would not admit the abrogation of their olde ceremonies and superstition. They knewe also that they shoulde haue to doe with the Gentyle Philosophers, men very subtile, and greatly exercised in extemporall and ready utterance of speach. Moreover, they knewe the condicion of the Comons, howe they vse so stouelye to maintaine their olde Mumpsimus, in so much that they will rather lose their lyfe than it. Howbeit, all these things cannot stoppe them from preparing themselves herevnto, being ready to take in good worth whatsoever trauels and daungers shoulde ensue. These mens diligence ought all such to imitate, as are appoynted of God to any publike office, forthwith to obey the calling of God, & constantly to go on in the same. For the Lorde cannot away with lingerers and trillers, as who of most right challengeth all thinges to himselfe. For this cause it is sayde, he was angry with Moses in time past, because he refused the office he called him vnto. And Christ sayth to the Disciple that woulde fyrst go and burie his father, followe mee, and let the deade burie their deade. Howbeit, Luke maketh mention here of three thinges, of eche whereof somewhat is to be sayde.

First he sheweth whither they went. To Seleucia, which was not farre distant

Heb. 5.

3. How Paule and Barnabas begonne to preach among the Gentyles

Exod. 3. 4.

Math. 8.

The Apo-

They preache
vnto the Cy-
priotes.

Rom. 5.

Math. 9. 18.

Luke. 9.

The Apo-
stles preache
the worde of
God.

They preache
in the Syna-
goge of the
Jewes.

Rom. 11.

See Theo-
dore tou-
ching the pro-
vidence of
God, in his
2. Sermon.

distant from Antiochia; and from thence to Salamine, a Citie of Cyprus. The olde Cosmographers for the most part attribute vnto Cyprus, among all the Ilandes of the Mediterranean sea, the chiefe prayse for fertilitie and riches. For this cause all the Cypriotes were so giuen to ryote and lecherie (as ere while we declared) that the whole Ilande was dedicated to Venus, who, as it is reported, was bozne there. Now this one thing declareth what great corruption of lyfe and maners reigned in that Nation, which had dedicate it selfe and the whole lande vnto Venus. Wherefore we must thinke it was not without a great cause, that they first went thither, being sent by the holy ghost to preach the Gospell vnto the Gentyles. For this is a singuler example of Gods fauour, which bleseth not to forsake sinners, but to seeke their saluation, that as Paule sayth: where sinne abounded, there might grace also abound. Wher vnto chiefly belongeth that saying of Christ, where he testifieth, that he came into the worlde to saue sinners. And there be notable examples of sinners, whome Christ very bountifullly and graciously embraced, amongst which, this present example is neyther least nor last. These things as they serue for our consolation; so they teach vs, that we may not rashly cast of sinners, but rather comfort and fraine them, if by any meanes they may be amended and saued.

Furthermore, here is noted the argument of their doctrine and preaching, where it is sayde, they preached the word of God. And it is certaine that in the worde of God all saluation is contained. Wherefore it was not needefull to rehearse all the articles of their doctrine, which may easly be gathered of other as well Sermons as Epistles of the Apostles. Let vs rather obserue this, that no mannes authoritie ought to be so great in the Church, as to preach what him listeth, seeing that we heare how Paule and Barnabas preached nothing of their owne bwayne, but the worde of God only. For where the Church is the house of God, in it must the word and voice of God onely sound. And it is a poynt of sacrilegall boldenesse, to teach any thing in the Church vnder pretence of Gods name, which is not agreeable with the worde of God. For the which cause we reade that aswell all the Prophetes as the Apostles, were bounde vnto this commaundement, to propone nothing vnto the Church, but that they receiued from the mouth of God. See Ezech. 3. Ierem. 1. Math. 28.

Thirdly, is declared where they taught, to say in the Synagoges of the Jewes. For although they were sent vnto the Gentyles, yet order was to be obserued, that saluation should first be preached vnto the Jewes. For so it behoued that after they through their owne default had fallen from saluation, the kingdome of God shoulde be caried vnto the Gentyles, that their fall might serue vnto the saluation of other Nations. Yea, if we well expende the matter, it shall appeare it was not without the deuise of Gods providence, that at that time the Jewes shoulde dwell scattered almost among all Nations. For hereby was offered the Apostles a very good occasion to preach the Gospell. For out of the law and Oracles of the Prophetes it was declared, that Iesus Christ was that Saviour of the worlde that was promised. Which thing when the Gentyles hearde, and perceiued that the hystorie of Iesus Christ agreed in all poyntes with the writings of the Prophetes, they beganne to haue a good opinion of the holy scriptures, which was the first stepp vnto saluation, and thus it came to passe, that they

they by true fayth embraced that sauour that was preached among them. Therefore the Apostles did very well and wisely to beginne their preaching in the Jewes Synagoges. Lette vs acknowledge the goodnesse of God, through whose benefyte true saluation by preaching of the Gospell is offered to vs also in these dayes, though we be vnmortall in Iesus Christ our Lorde, to whome be prayse, honor, power, and glory for ever. Amen.

The xxxvij. Homely.

W H E N they had gone through the Ile vnto Paphos, they founde a certaine sorcerer, a false Prophete a Iewe, whose name was Bar Iesu, which was with the ruler of the countie, one Sergius Paulus a prudent man. The same Ruler called vnto him Barnabas and Saule, and desired to heare the worde of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, and sought to turne away the Ruler from the fayth. Then Saule which also is called Paule, being full of the holy ghost, sette his eyes on him, and sayde: o full of all subtiltie and deceyfulnesse, thou chyld of the Deuill, thou enimie of all righteousnesse, wilt thou not cease to peruert the straight wayes of the Lorde? And now beholde the hande of the Lord is vpon thee, and thou shalt be blinde, and not see the sunne, for a season. And immediatly there fell on him a myst and a darknesse, and he went about seeking them that should leade him by the hande. Then the Ruler when he saw what came to passe, beleued, and wondred at the doctrine of the Lord.



That sentence of Dauid the King and Prophete, is very notable, where he prophecieth that Iesus Christ shall rule in the midst of his enimies. For hereby a kingdome is promised vnto Christ, but we are therewith also admonished of the subtiltie and tyrannie of the Deuill, which assaulteth the same kingdome with continuall warre. This booke declareth vnto vs many & notable examples hereof. For hither-

to it hath set out to vs those which haue openly encountred with Christ, such as were fyrst the chiefe heads of Ierusalem, and then Herode called Agrippa. Yet Christ our king ouercame their enterprises, and they well founde that they stroue against him in vaine. And Herode because he attempted a bolder enterpryse than the rest, bought his wickednesse with horrible punishment. Yet Satan pulleth not back his foote, but bringeth into the game place a new Champion for his kingdome, which is Elymas the sorcerer, if by any meanes he coulde by magicall sleighes and conueyaunce, ouercame these soul-dours of Christ, whome he saue perill of imprisonment and present death coulde not subdue. For where Paule and Barnabas had spredde the light of the Gospell almost throughout Cyprus, and now drewe nigh vnto Paphos, a great renoumed Citie, he setteth this sorcerer against them, by his meane to stoppe the prosperous course of the Gospell among the Cypriotes. Yet the Apostles overcome, hauing Christ to their Captaine, whose glory the more Satan went about to obscure and darken, shined the brighter. The describing of this contention is diligently to be considered, where Christ setteth his Apostles to wrestle with a famous sorcerer and deceyuer, for besides that it teacheth vs alwayes to looke to be contended with, it egregiously

1. The occas-
sion of the con-
tention be-
twene Paule
and Elymas
the sozcerer.

Luke. 15.
Iohn. 10.

2. The mee-
ting together
of Paule and
Elymas the
sozcerer.

presenteth out the manners and conditions of false prophetes, and teacheth us howe we shall fight against them. But that we maye receyue the more commoditie hereby, we will first consider the occasion of this contention, then their encounter and coming together, and last of all the conclusion.

The occasion of this businesse cometh to haue bene the prosperous successe of the gospell in the Ile of Cyprus. For where beginning at Salamine, which standeth on the sea coast Eastwarde, the Apostles had gone through the whole Islande, as farre as to Paphos westwarde, so that the fame of this newe doctrine by them thus published, came to the hearing of Sergius Paulus the Proconsull, he sent for the Apostles, and was desirous to heare them preach the worde of God. Whereby it appeareth, though he were a Romaine, that he was desirous of the truth, and that he begonne already to suspect the Gentyle religion, which perhappes was the cause that he gaue eare to this sozcerer the Jewe, hoping that he was able to teache him the truth. And pricked forward with like desire, he sent for Paule and Barnabas also, to heare what they taught. But this coulde not Elymas the sozcerer abyde, who hitherto had bene very familiar with the Proconsull: He therefore diligently watched all meanes, to withstande the Apostles, as shortly after we shall heare. Nowe before we go any further, two thinges are to be marked. First that God hath some that be his, in all degrees of people, as we sayde in the sermon before going. Here is to be added howe he bleth to call and saue those that be his, when they seeme to stande vpon the pit of destruction. For Sergius Paulus, of whome mention is here made, being brought up from his childhode in y religion of the gentiles, had bene alwayes vnto idolatrie. Afterwarde, although he acknowledged his errour, he was encombrd with a newe and more hurtfull errour, whyle he hitteth vpon this Jewe a Sozcerer and false Prophet. Who can saye that God had any care of this man, whome he suffreth to be seduced with so many and diuers errours. But that faythfull shephearde Christ seeketh his lost sheepe in the mountaynes and balleges, yea, and in the sea also, and will not suffer them to be taken out of his hande. This place therefore teacheth vs that we must not despaire to hastilye of any man, except he manifestly proue himselfe to be of the number of the reprobate. Moreouer, Luke declareth in this Sergius the example of a good and a godly magistrate. For both he is very desirous to learne the truth, and also he ouerhastilye condemneth not the Ministers of a doctrine not heard before, but calling them before him, giueth them libertie frely to declare their doctrine: The Princes of our dayes shoulde doe well to imitate this man, whereof manye of them condemne the doctrine of truth, before they knowe it, and vse cruelly to punish them, whose fayth and religion they are utterly ignoraunt of. But let them remember, they shall not be excused through ignorance, considering it is their parts to do nothing of ignorance, but diligently to search out and examine all causes.

These things being thus premised, let vs nowe marke howe the contention beginneth, where it plainly appeareth that the Apostles were the beginners hereof. For where Sergius the Proconsull had sent for them, to learne of them the worde of God, it is like that they made no tariance, but with all speede hastened to set forth the kingdome of God. And here streightway cometh forth this Magitian, and withstandeth them as they preach

the

the worde. For he quickly sawe that there was like to be no longer abiding for him with the Proconsull, if he were once lightned with the knowledge of truth. And although Luke declareth not after what sort he resisted the Apostles, yet because he was a false Prophete and sorcerer, it maye be easily gathered, that he left no wayes vnassayde, which might seme to oppresse the truth. And this Contender is diligentely to be considered, that by him we may learne to knowe all false Prophetes. And first marke his proude name, whereby he challengeth to himselfe a certaine Godheade. For being called after his right name Elymas, he woulde in the Syrian tongue be called Bariesu, that is to saye, the sonne of the Saniour, whereby we coniecture that he presumed to promise saluation, to them that woulde follow his teaching. He is therefore of the number of those, that Christ prophesied shoulde come, and challenge to them the maiestie of his name. But it is the propertie of false Prophetes, that if themselues vsurpe not the name of God, yet they will haue their doctrine called after his name, that vnder this pretence they might the easlyer beguile the simple. Thus Zedechias speaking befoze Achab of the victorie that he shoulde get against the Syrians, vseth that common beginning of the Prophetes, Thus sayth the Lorde. The same may we see in diuers others. Yea, there was yet neuer false Prophete, but he went about to get him authoritie by colour of Gods name. Moreouer, this he doth according to the vsage of all false Prophetes, he getteth him the friendship and familiaritie of the Proconsull, and cleaueth fast vnto him, as a most neare companion. For deceyuers vse to get them the friendship of great estates, both for that when they haue gotte them on their sides, other by their example are the easlyer allured, and also to purchase themselue safetie by their authoritie. For where they knowe they are destitute of the ayde of truth, they must needes seke for the arme and power of man, whereby to defende themselves. So Baalam in time past, notwithstanding he was admonished to the contrary by Oracle, went about to get the friendship of Balac king of the Moabites. And it is manifest that the Romaine Antichristes haue clymed to such power as they haue, being ayded with the amitie and armoz of Princes, yea, the deceyuers and hooded Juglers, are so neare and at hande about Princes, that they can scarce let a fart but they must know it. And this is the cause that such teachers frame their doctrine according to the delicate eares of their hearers, least they shoulde offende them, vpon whome they wholly depende. This was Elymas onely scope and ende, to turne the Proconsull from the fayth, that he shoulde not beleue that that Paule sayde. And as all the Ministers of true doctrine consent herein, to winne menne vnto God by fayth in Christ, so all deceyuers agree herein, to ouerthrowe the faith in Christ, which being ouerthrowne, the kingdome of God can take no place among menne. For Satan knoweth that his force is most weakened by true fayth, wherof there are examples euerywhere in the Euangelistes.

But let vs see howe Paule confuted this wicked enchaunter. First Luke sayth he was full of the holy ghost, wherby he meeneth that he was moued by the spirite somewhat aboue his ordinarie wont, which thing he therfore declareth afozhande, that we might thinke he did nothing of fleshly affection, when we shall heare his heauy and intolletable weyght of wordes. In the meane season we are admonished to fyght against the enemies of truth,

The condicions of false Prophetes.
Math. 24.

Paule confuteth Elymas.

L.Iohn.4.

not with the blinde affection of fleshe, but by the conduct and counsaile of the holy ghost, whome vndoubtedly they shall fynde to be their enemye, be they neuer so well garded with worldly power, Then he goeth on in his busynesse, fying his eyes fast vpon Elymas, which is an argument of a well meaning and vnfearefull minde. And verily it becommeth vs boldly and constantly to resist Antichristians, that they maye thinke men feare them not. For why shoulde we feare them, seeing he is greater that is on our side. Why also shoulde they be the more encouraged through our cowardynesse, who already are turmoyled with the terrours of their naughtie conscience? Thirde he painteth him out egregiously in his colours, and ioyneth a speciall weight and poysse vnto euery worde. First, o full of all deceytfulnesse sayth he. He accuseth him therfore of subtiltie and craft, as one that sought praise and authoritie by sorcery and enchauntment. Secondly, he vphraydeth him with naughtynesse of minde, being readye to commit whatsoeuer wickednesse it were. For what is more naughtye and wicked, than vnder colour of Gods holy name, to beguile men, which is the chiefe commendation of false Prophetes and sorcerers: For by this meanes, they sette God at fire and leauen, as they saye, who threatneth that he will not let the prophanation of his name go vnuenged. Thirde, he calleth him the chyld of the deuill, to declare his impudencie, who presumed to call himselfe the sonne of the Sauour. For that he was a childe of the Devils, both his insolent pride of minde, and earnest studie of naughtynesse did abundantly declare. Fourthly, he calleth him the enemy of all righteousnesse, and that well worthy, forasmuch as he was Christes aduersarie, without whome can be founde no righteousnesse, that is before God acceptable. Fifthly, thou cease not (sayth he) to peruert the straight wayes of the Lorde. In the which wordes he comprehendeth two most heinous offences, incurable maliciousnesse, and earnest desire to peruert the worde of the Lorde. For his worde is simple and pure, and sheweth vnto vs a most playne waye of saluation. But through the naughtynesse of manne, it seemeth vncertaine and full of perplexitie. Last of all, he thundreth against him the heauy sentence of punishment. And now beholde, the hande of the Lorde is vpon thee, and thou shalt be blinde, and not see for a season. Where yet among the terrible thunder crackes of Gods threatnes, we see there is hope of saluation left, if he will repent and turne vnto the Lord. For God so bleseth to reueale his wrath by his worde, that yet he will not haue them swallowed vpp of despaire, whome he will haue saued. The chiefe vse of this place is, that we learne what the faythfull Ministers of Christes Church haue to doe in these dayes, where many Elymas are buzeing in the eares of Kings and Princes, to bring them from the fayth, that they may at their pleasure oppresse the ruder sort and the Commynaltie. For we can iudge the Monkes and Priests none other, which deceytfully sell their trifles, vnder coloz of Gods holy name, and like the presumptuous Gyautes arrogate to themselves power vpon heauen, who of set purpose strue against the righteousnesse of Christ, and the faith that maketh righteous, who impudently set light the authoritie of Gods word, and corrupt the same with the traditions of men, who make the most plaine way of saluation most intricate and vnfyndable, with their infynite mazes of Monkish bowes, of orders, of rules, of merites, of bulles, of pardons, and of cases reserued: who fynally not here-

with

with content, procure Princes to committe slaughter and murther, and to shedde innocent bloude. These must be accused with like boldenesse and libertie, that men maye learne to beware of them, which hitherto haue beguiled them with their stagelike maiestie. Neyther lette vs giue eare vnto them, which in this case prescribe vs rules of modestie and charitie, forasmuch as it is euident that many of them be incurable, and are bent onely to defende their vsurped tyrannie, be it right, or be it wrong.

Nowe remaineth the ende and successe of this contention, heauy for Elymas the deceyuer, but most ioyfull for Sergius the Proconsull. For on Elymas falleth by and by the punishment pronounced by Paule, and being stricken blinde, he gropeth for one to leade him by the hande. The like we sawe fall out befoze to Ananias and Sapphira, whereby it behoueth vs to learne the power of Gods word. The chiefe thing to be marked in this place is what remaineth for false teachers and deceyuers, which dare to withstande the worde of God, eyther for bauntage or honour. They are made blinde for the most part, if not in body, yet in minde, and the Lorde of his iust iudgement hath giuen them vp into a reprobate sense, so that they are neyther able to embrace the truth, nor yet to forsake and auoide manifest and knowne errors. Furthermoze, being in Gods iudgement defamed, they lose the strength and ayde of fleshe, wherein they so much trusted. So is fulfilled that that is written in Zachary. ii. chap. o Idols shepehearde that leaueth the flocke. The sworde shall come vpon his arme, and vpon his right eie. His arme shall be cleane dried vp, and his right eye shall be sore blinded. And there want not examples of this iudgement in our dayes, but we want eyes to behold them. And these our Elymas are so much the moze miserable, that being blinde, yet they thinke still they see, and seeke for none to leade them, but contemptuously disdain those which God offereth them. Furthermoze, as this contention came to passe vnprosperously for Elymas, so great profyte came thereby vnto the Proconsull, whome the Lorde by this meanes deliuered out of darkenesse. For he seeing the iudgement of God, beleued, and beganne to make much of Christes doctrine. This is the peculiar propertie of Gods children, that they acknowledge the iudgements of God, & are amended by others example, where the euill and deceyuers waxe worse and worse. But in all this storie, this thing is most comfortable, that we see the truth can be vanquished, neyther with open force of Tyrants, nor subtile conueyance of the Deuill. For being pressed and borne downe, it riseth againe, and by struiuing gathereth the moze strength. Therefore let vs embrace the truth, and constantly stande by the authoz and defender thereof, Iesus Christ our Lorde: to whome be praise, honoz, power, and glozy, for ever. Amen.

3. The ende
and successe
of the conten-
tion.

2. Tim. 3.

The.lxxxviii.Homely.

WHEN Paule departed from Paphos, they that were with him, came to Perga in Pamphilia, and Iohn departed from them, and returned to Ierusalem. But they wandred through the countries, and came from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the Sinagoge on the Sabboth daye, and sate downe. And after the lecture of the lawe and the Prophetes, the Rulers of the Sina-

Sinagoge sent vnto them, saying: ye men and brethren, if you haue any sermon to exhort the people, say on.



There appeare many and notable tokens of diuine power and maiestie, in the workes of Iesus Christ, but among them al this is the most notable and euident, that by y^e ministerie of the Apostles within few yeres, he subdued all the world. For where it is manifest, that they were furnished with no fleshly succors, but were the least esteemed of all men, and yet brought to passe things of such importance: we must needs acknowledge that Gods power wrought by them, whereby it came to passe, that the worlde was brought to a newe countenance, and the Gentyles deliuered from the errors of their olde superstition, and receyued the true religion. This is the chiefe thing that we haue to consider in this present voyage of Paule and Barnabas. For these two being sent forth by the appoyntment of God, to preach the Gospell indifferently to all Nations, they prosperously passe through all impedimentes standing in their waye. And first coming to Cyprus, they subdue vnto the kingdome of Christ, the inhabitants of a most rich Islande, giuen to all riotousnesse and worshipping of Venus, and they doe not onely winne vnto them the comunon people, but Sergius also the Romaine Proconsull, whose authoritie onely had bene ynough to haue resisted them, if it had bene mans affayres only they had gone about: and they leade about Elymas the soxerer, a chosen instrument of the Deuill, and stricken with horrible blindenesse in triumph, so that in one conflict it appeareth mannes force, and the Devils sleighes, were ouercomen both together. Nowe let vs see howe such a prosperous beginning gaue a good occasion to the Apostles, farther to spreade the kingdome of Christ.

1. Pamphilia
is lightened
with the gospell.

Rom. 15.

2. Iohn Mark
fasteth in the
ministerie of
the Gospell.

Having gone through Cyprus, they passe from Paphus into Pamphilia, and came vnto Perga, a Citie of that Region, making a great voyage both by sea and by lande. And there is no doubt but that they caused the doctrine of the Gospell to shine also ouer Pamphilia, seeing for that ende they toke in hande this voyage. And this is a rare example of Apostolike zeale and industrie, that although they had brought a most famous Island to the knowledge of Christ, yet they thinke not now to leaue of, as though they had fully accomplished their dutie, but hold on still, and thinke they are the more bounde vnto Christ, the more fauourably they see he furthereth their beginnings. So Paule in another place, hauing fylled all places from Arabia vnto Illyricum, with the Gospell of Iesus Christ, stayeth not so, but purposeth in his minde to go through Italie and Spaine also. By which examples their slothfulnesse is reprovied, which hauing yet scarce begonne and giuen the onset, make holyday, leaue of, thinking they haue done very much already, and supposing it neyther mete nor right that men should looke for any more at their handes. But it behoueth vs to continue vnto the ende, that we be neuer wearie of doing Christ seruice, as long as we hope we may set forth Gods glorie, and bring any to the knowledge of saluation.

But being occupied in this most holy businesse and trauayle, befalleth an heauy case. For while they are busied in training others vnto Christ, they lose their companion and fellow minister, whome they had chosen out

of

of a great number. This was Iohn surnamed Marke; sonne to that Mary; to whose house Peter came when he was escaped out of prison, as hath bene declared before. This Iohn, as hereafter shall appeare in the. xv. Chapter, being wearied with continuall trauailes and daungers, left them, and returned to Ierusalem, whereby he not onely disapointed them of his helpe, to whome he ought fast to haue cleaued in that most godly businesse, but also was the occasion of a bitter contention that arose afterwarde betwene Paule and Barnabas. But bicause it is sayde he returned to Ierusalem, where his mother was: it is like he pretended for his floth, the loue he ought to his mother being a widowe: so that he maye be iudged to be of the number of them, wherof in the Gospell he is an example, which being called of Christ, sayde, he woulde first go and burie his father. The holy ghost setteth out such exampls to vs, not to be followed, but that we might vnderstande there will be alwayes sidebackes, and heavy calamities that shall hinder the course of the Gospell. For Satan who desired to syt euen the very Apostles, is not ydle. For although he could not pull them cleane from Christ, yet he brought to passe, that they were so feared with his apprehension and bandes, that they all fled from him. So we reade in the. vi. of Iohn, that diuers thousandes fell from him at once. And Paule which now saith Marke thus slippe away, complaineth afterwarde howe Demades embraced thys present worlde, and when he shoulde be brought before Caesar, howe all his friendes forsooke him. Let no man therefore be offended at the leuitie and inconstantnesse of some people now a dayes, who hauing profited very well in Christes religion, by and by giue ouer. For both Christ and his Apostles prophesied such should come. In the meane while let these men remember that they grieuoussly sinne. For they forsake Christ his cause, which is a kinde of denying him. Beside, they offende the weaker sort, and giue occasion to them that thinke not well of the Gospell, and of the Christian faith, to sclaunder it, so that by their meane the name of Christ is yll spoken of. Furthmore, they make all them that are vnknowne and forreners, to suspect them whome otherwise they woulde succour and relieue. Finallye, they are authours of diuision, while they cause other to take part with them, who ought to ioyne both hearts and handes together, to set forth the kingdome of Christ. And they offende the more grieuoussly, the more they be of authoritie.

But to returne to the Apostles, let vs learne by their exampls what we haue to do, if y like things come to passe. For, do they when they vnderstand of Markes sodeine departure, leaue y office they are put in charge with? No. But they go through Pamphilia, & passing ouer the mount Taurus, come in to Pisidia, and to Antioch (which sometime was also called Caesarea, as Prinic testifieth) where they preach the Gospell more earnestly than euer they did before, as the things following shall abundantly declare. We are by this example admonished, that we must not eyther for faldowde or floth of other, suffer our selues to be plucked from doing out dutie. For other mennes faultes cannot excuse vs, whose falles we must rather eschew than imitate. And bicause it is the Lordes cause that we stande in, it shall be easie for him to defende it, though but by a fewe, and those of no authoritie in the worldes sight. Yea, he many times suffereth those to fall away, of whom we hoped for most helpe, that thereby he might declare, howe we should re-

Iohn. 16.

Iohn. 14.

Math. 28.

Psal. 27.

E say. 40.

4. What the
Apostles did
in Antioch of
Pisidia.

The truth
must be prea-
ched openly.

Iohn. 18.

iope but in God alone. Besides this, though we be forsaken of the worlde, yet be we not alone: for that that Christ pronounced of himselfe, must be applied vnto all his members. The time commeth (sayth he) that you shall be scattered euery one into his owne, and shall leaue me alone: and yet am I not alone, for the father is with me. **Pea he sayth moreouer:** I will not leaue you succourlesse. Beholde I am with you vnto the ende of the worlde. Hereto belongeth that saying of Dauid: when my father and mother forsooke mee, the Lorde tooke me, and receyued me. And these thinges must not Ministers of the worde onely remember, but also Princes and Magistrates. For these also haue God for the authoz of their vocation, who testifyeth that he is in the midst of them. Wherefore if they be constant, in setting forth his glorie, there is no cause they shoulde be moued with the terroz of the worlde, forasmuch as they shall haue God for their protector and reuenger. Lette priuate persons thinke so likewise, that they be not dismayde at the countenance and loke of the worlde. For the worlde shall perish, but the worde of the Lord wherevpon both our saluation and vocation is founded, endureth for euer.

Further, let vs see what the Apostles did at Antioch. Vpon a Sabbath daye they go into the Synagoge and sit downe. This Luke writeth, to shewe vnto vs, that they sought occasion to teache or preach the Gospell. For on the Sabbath dayes the Jewes vsed publikely to assemble, to be instructed in the lawe, and to make their prayers vnto God. Which thing was the cause that not long after, the Apostles went into the Jewes Synagoge at Salamine also. And there is no doubt, but they did the like also otherwheres, forasmuch as there was no hope for them in any other place more commodiously to teach. And they were not deceyued. For when the solempne and accustomed lecture of the lawe and Prophetes was ended, the Rulers of the Synagoge supposing them to be no common persons, gaue them leaue to speake vnto the people. For they send a message to them, saying: ye men and brethren, if you haue any Sermon to exhort the people, saye on. And so Paul beganne a singular sermon of Iesus Christ, and the whole mysteric of our saluation, the beginning whereof (God willing) we shall heare to morowe. At this time we haue certaine other thinges to consider, of which we will speake in order.

First and foremost the Apostles spredde not the doctrine of saluation abroad in Tauerne, among drunken blowbolles, nor yet in corners and woodes among the rude and ignorant people, but they come into a publike place, and openly teach the Gospell. This it appeareth they did after the example of Christ, who vsed himselfe to go into the Synagoges, and to teach openly. And when he was examined by Caiphas, of his doctrine and Disciples, as though he had bene an heretike, he defendeth himselfe by this argument only, that he taught openly in the Synagoge and in the Church, and was not afrayde to abide the iudgement of the whole people, touching his doctrine. Which examples serue to reprove them, which some newe opinions sette fly among the people, and flie and abhorre nothing so much as the light and iudgement of the congregation. This one thing abundantly proueth that they are deceyuers, seeing that truth desireth nothing so much as the light. Where yet we do not condemne them, which being compassed about with persecutions, exercise the duties of godly religion in se-

cret.

cret, which thing we reade was done at Ierusalem by the faythfull in the house of Mary, and otherwheres: so that they be ready to giue an account of their fayth, to as many as require the same, and not like the Anabaptistes, by stubborne silence and craftie dissimulation, delude them that go about to trie their fayth and doctrine.

Then againe it is no superfluous notation of time, where it is sayde, they went into the sinagoge on the Sabbath dayes. For hereby he teacheth vs, that they diligently kept the religion of y Sabbath, which day it is euident, was dedicated vnto God at y beginning of the world, & was diligently commended by Moses vnto the Israelites. For where we be busied with diuers occupations, it was necessary that there should be one time appointed, free from all cares and businesse, wherein we shoulde giue our selues wholly both in body and soule to the honouring of God. Therefore God appointed the seauenth daye to this exercise, which he for this cause called his daye, that when that daye commeth, we should abstaine from all other businesses and exercises. And he ordeyned it to be kept so holily, that he appointed death for the breakers thereof. And in the Prophets this is reckoned for one of the most grievous offences and causes of the captiuitie of Babylon, that they did unhallowe the Sabbathes of the Lorde. For the which cause the sonne of God, although he many times reprehended the superstitious keeping of them, yet he diligently obserued those thinges wherein the worship of God consisted. For on those days he entred into the Sinagoges and was present at their publike assemblies and prayers. Moreover, he taught and hearde others teach, and also vsed diligently the deedes of liberallitie. Which thing the Apostles remembryng, they thought good also to followe the example of their maister. But now a dayes the matter is come to that passe, that among Christians they may go for the best menne, that breake the Sabbathes but with handy workes, toward the getting of their liuing, whereas a great many prophane them with heynous wickednesse, nor at any time doe men more sinne in pryde and arrogancie, in drunkennesse, concupiscence and ryot, than on that day which ought to be bestowed wholly in the study of godly workes, and eternall rest and quiet. And notwithstanding these thinges are openly committed, yet we still seeke what should be the causes of the miseries and wretchednesse of our dayes.

Howbeit, where the religion of the Sabbath as touching the outward obseruation, consisteth chiefly in the holy assemblies which Moses calleth holpe conuocations. Luke declareth diligently what was done in this assembly. First, the Apostles sate downe, no doubt, among the residue that were there gathered together. This is the dutie of modestie and honestie, wherof regard must alwaies be had euerywhere, but chiefly in the Church, that nothing be done out of order and dishonestly. Then he maketh mention holwe the lawe and the Prophetes were reade, which was obserued among the Jewes of a common custome, as we shall vnderstand a little after by Pauls sermon, and by the wordes of Iames in the. xv. Chapter. For so Moses ordeyned by the commaundement of God, which custome after their returne from Babylon, Esdras restored againe, as appeareth in Nehemias cap. 8. And Christ vsed none other custome, when out of the place of Esay, he taught the mysteries of our saluation in the Sinagoge at Nazareth. These thinges teach vs, that in the congregation, the worde of God

The Sabbath dayes must be kept holp.

Num. 15.

The order of holy meetings or assemblies

Luke. 4.

Mach.15.

E say. 29.

2.Tim.3.

comprehended in the Scriptures, ought to be intreated. For this cause Paule commendeth vnto the Ministers of Churches the studie of holy scripture, because none other voyce, than such as speaketh in the scripture, must be heard in Gods house. Therefore their errour is enormous and absurde in that Church which declare vnto the simple people most foolish trifies out of the Legendes of Saints, or else bige and exact mans traditions, wherewith Christ himselfe out of the Prophete teacheth, that all Gods religion is corrupted. Which thing as it is in these dayes so much frequented, so it at any time any place be left for the word of God, it is bled to be sayde or song commonlye in a strange tongue, so that no profyte can come to the people thereby. But touching this matter, see Pauls iudgement. 1. Cor. 14. Thirdlye, this also is to be commended, that none of them taketh vpon him to speake, before he be lawfully requested. For although of auncient custome, the interpreters and Prophetes, sate next to the Teachers, yet none impudently intruded himselfe, so that vndesired or without necessitie, he woulde speake vnto the people. Wherefore Paule and Barnabas also, although they were sent by the holy ghost, yet they thinke it not good to breake so profytable and auncient a custome of the Church. Therefore the Anabaptistes disorder is not to be suffered, which abuse the place of Paule. 1. Cor. 14. saying that all men ought to haue leaue to speake in the Church. For Paule in that place speaketh of those, that had the gift of interpretation and prophetic, and sate with the teachers, as was euen nowe sayde. But such as were no interpreters, he commaundeth to keepe silence. And he commaundeth all things to be done decently and in order. Neyther lette any man object here vnto me, what I thinke the Apostles woulde haue done, if no man had giuen them leaue. For who can doubt but they woulde then haue bled the libertie giuen them of the spirite? But forasmuch as they might vse the same, and not breake the custome of the Church, they must needes haue bene reprehended, if they woulde without cause haue broken that custome. Furthermore, this was very well done of the Antiochians, to giue leaue vnto men vnknotone and straungers to save their minde. For they woulde not quench the spirite, nor despise prophesying, wherof Paule elsewhere giueth warning. 1. Thess. 5. Here is chiefly to be obserued, that they require a sermon of exhortation. For thus they expresse the ende wherunto all doctrine and preaching in the Church is to be referred, namely that the Church be not onely taught what it ought to doe, but may also be prouoked with godly exhortation to doe their dutie, and so may be builded vpon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophetes, and may truly close and ioyne together vnder Christ their heade. And hereto belongeth that commendation of holpe scripture, which Paule sayth is profitable to teach, to improoue, to amende, and to instruct in righteousnesse, that the man of God may be perfect and prepared vnto all good workes. These thinges are to be obserued of them, which make their sermons in the Church for ostentation sake, and are more careful for their owne glory, than for Christes. Let every man rather learne so to order all exercises of the Church, that by godly exhortations they may be builded in true faith, vnto the glory of Jesus Christ: to whom be praise, honoz, power, and glory for ever. Amen.

The

The.lxxxix.Homelie.

THEN Paule stoode vp and beckened with the hande for silence, and sayde: Men of Israel, and ye that feare God, giue audience. The God of this people chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as straungers in the lande of Egypt, and with an high arme brought he them out of it: and about the time of fourtie yeares, suffered he their maners in the wildernesse. And he destroyed seauen Nations in the lande of Canaan, and deuided their land to them by lot. And afterward he gaue vnto them Iudges, about the space of foure hundred and fyfty yeares, vntill the time of Samuell the Prophete. And afterwarde they desired a king, and God gaue vnto them Saule the sonne of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of fourty yeres.



NOwe followeth it how Luke the Euangelist describeth the Sermon which Paule the Apostle that most chosen bestell made to the Congregation at Antioche: and this is the fyrst of Paules sermons that the holy ghost would, should be put in writing, not that he iudged the rest vnworthy to be knowne, but that by this we might iudge of the other, which could not be but like vnto this, bicause the spirite of God is at all times and places, like vnto it selfe: Howbeit, it is not without a cause that Luke chose this sermon chiefly of all other, so diligently to rehearse. For as this one comprehendeth in it mooste fully all the mysteries of Iesus Christ and of our saluation: so when those of Antioch contemned it, the Apostles did that which we reade they very seldome did before. For shaking the dust of from their fete vpon the Iewes, they caried the doctrine of saluation vnto others.

Furthermore, the argument of the Sermon is the same that Christ commaunded the Apostles to obserue. For he labourerth altogether to bring the Iewes from the vaine affiance of the lawe and ceremonies therof, vnto the fayth in Christ. For the better obteyning whereof he procedeth in most commodious order. For fyrst where he knewe they gloryed much in certaine prerogatiues, so that they thought it superfluous, to search or take any other waye of saluation, he teacheth that they haue nothing of themselves wherein to glory, but that they haue receyued what so euer good qualitie is in them of the mere mercie of God, who for the Melsias sake, which he had promised, did boughsafe both to saue them, and also to giue them those prerogatiues. And thereof he gathereth that it is necessarye for them to embrace that Melsias, least they fall from the grace of God, and be deprived of all goodnesse. This done, he sheweth that this Iesus is the sonne of God, and of Mary the virgin, and that sauour and Melsias that was promised, and here he so reasoneth of his office, that he briefly comprehendeth all the businesse of our saluation, and confyrmeth the same with euident Oracles of the olde Testament. At length he sheweth the threats of the Prophets, that as many as despised the sonne of God, and the saluation in him offered, might knowe that the horrible iudgement of God, hanged ouer their heades. And this is the summe of all his sermon, which it suffreth in fewe wordes to haue touched, bicause we entende to speake more at large

The argument & parts
of Paules sermon.

1. The beginning of
Pauls sermon.

Rom. 12.

Suetonius
Tranquillus
in the life of
Augustus
chap. 53.

1. Iohn. 5.

of euery thing in his place. Nowe let vs come to the treatie of the same.

The beginning is short, after the maner of the Apostles, not to be suspected of any curious artificiousnesse or conueyaunce. He fyrst holdeth out or lifteth by his hande, which was a kinde of gesture vsed in the olde time to cause men to keepe silence, when others were about to speake, as we shall see in places following, not so fewe as one. Then to make them the more attent, he calleth them by such names, as he both knewe would get their good will, and also admonishe them of their dutie. For fyrst he calleth them Israelites, in which name they greatlye reioyced, not onely bicause of Iacob the Patriarch, which was fyrst so called, but bicause therein also were conteyned manifest promises of Gods helpe and protection, as we may see Gen. 32. And he addeth: And yee that feare God, giue audience, so plainly thereby admonishing them of their dutie, that they might perceyue they were then true Israelites, when they feared God, and obeyed his worde. The breuitie of the Apostles beginning, admoniseth vs of two things very worthy to be knowne and considered. The fyrst is, wherefore those tytles serue, that was vse in the beginning, when we reuerently and honourably speake vnto the hearers, wherein much is to be attributed to honour, euen by the testimony of Paule, who commaundeth vs in giuing honour to go one before another. Yet must we take diligent heede, that we nourish not the ambition of arrogant men, with a flattering tongue and meaning, which are euen drunke with the pride of glorious names. But this rather we must obserue, that with mete and condigne names, we admonishe them with whome we haue to doe, of their dutie. Therefore the simplicitie of our auncesters and elders is very worthy to be commended, who being content with the names of their office and dutie only, neuer knew what these painted and flattering tytles ment. For what wilt thou adde vnto the name of a king: that shall be more honourable or noble than it, seeing the very name alone conteyneth more in it than any manne is able to perfourme: And if thou haue to speake vnto Christians, what canst thou deuise more amiable than the name of brother, or more honourable than the name of Christian, wherby both the Priestly dignitie, and Princely maiestie, wherunto Christ hath aduanced vs, is exprest: But now a dayes the worlde is come to such foolishnesse, that they are iudged rude and rusticall, that stuffe not their orations and writings with counterfeyted and most piewish and ridiculous tytles, whereby they make men already not well in their wits, starke staring madde. How much better did Augustus Caesar, who thought this name Dominus, or Lorde, more honorable, than sitting for a mortall man as he was: Secondly, we are taught what maner of men they shoulde be that will heare the worde of God worthily, and to their profyte and vtilitie. First they must be Israelites, which in the wrestling of temptations, must take fast holde of the worde of God, and not suffer it by anye aduersitie to be taken from them. Therefore is fayth required, whereby the Apostle witnesseth, we ouercome. Then must they be such as feare God, and tremble with great reuerence at his worde, as the Lorde admoniseth by his Prophet. Esay. 66. For it cannot be that any can obey the worde of God, but he that hath learned to thinke well of it. For the which cause when Moses came to talke with God, he was commaunded to put of his shooes, that is to say, all beastly and fleshy affections, whereby the maiestie of God bleseth to be diuen

men awaye. Nowe seeing there be so fewe such hearers in these dayes, for that cause we see the worde of God is so much preached in baine.

But to retorne vnto Paule, he addeth to his beginning, the narration of an hystorie, wherein the fyrst part of his Oration is ended. And he taketh the beginning of his narration of the fathers, therby declaring that he preached neyther newe God, nor newe fayth, but the same by the which the fathers in tyme past were saued. For he affirmeth that they had in deede many singuler gistes, but yet nothing but that God of his grace gaue them, who woulde haue the Sauour that he promised, borne of their posteritie. But bicause they which trust in their owne worthinesse, can hardly acknowledge the grace of God, Paule bseth a diligent rehearsall of Gods benefyts, which both maintaineth the grace of god, against the boasters of their merits, and also contayneth manifest examles of our whole redemption. Wherfore it shall not be from Pauls purpose, if we runne them all ouer, and expende such poyntes as serue for our instruction.

First he toucheth the fountaine of all goodnesse, which is free election. The God of this people (sayeth he) chose our fathers. He calleth him the God of the people of the Jewes, not after the maner of the gentiles, which appoynted to euery Nation their peculiar God, but bicause that God which was the Lorde and gouernor of all Nations, chose vnto him the people of Jewes before all other, by whom he would be knowne vnto all the world. That this election or choyle, was of his free mercie, the Scripture teacheth in euery place. Verily Iosue testifieth that Abraham serued straunge Gods before he was called. And Moses doth many times inculcate this election, that they might vnderstande whome to thanke for all those benefytes that they had receyued. And hereto belong the things which we read in Ezechiel 16. and Amos. 3. and they take from the Jewes all occasion of glorying. Hereby also appeareth that our saluation, and whatsoeuer we haue that good is, ought to be referred vnto the grace of God, whereby he did vouchsafe to chuse vs also, before the foundations of the world were layde. Dauid therefore doth well saye: Blessed is the man whome thou hast chosen. And if we haue no goodnesse of our selues, but are chosen of God, what madnesse is it I pray you, to attribute saluation to our merites or works, which vnlesse free election go before, cannot please God.

Secondly, he alleageth the glory and notable deliuerie of this people out of Egypt. For when they were Pilgrimes and straungers in Egypt, God did marueylously exalt them, fyrst by Ioseph, who being made ruler of Egypt, obtained fauour for them, of the king of that Countrie. After that being oppressed with tyrannie, he brought them out of the house of bondage into libertie, with an high or mighty arme, that is to saye, by myracles and wonders with great power. And that this was a free benefyte and goodnesse, appeareth in this, that they were pilgrimes and men most abiect. For what coulde such deserue? To saye nothing in the meane season howe they were polluted and defyled with the superstition of Egypt, whereby they deserued rather to be kept in bondage still, than to be sette at libertie. These things containe in them a fygure of our common redemption, much agreeing with this present argument. For it is manifest, we are all pilgrimes vpon the earth, and haue here no continuall dwelling place. Such therefore as we who deserued no possession vpon earth, hath God lift vpp into heauen,

2. The narration.

1. Free election or choyle.

Psa. 76. 147

Iosua. 24.

Ephe. 1.

Psal. 65.

3. The deliuerie out of Egypt.

heauen, yea, he hath wilsafe to take as his children. He also hath deliuered vs being oppressed with the deadly tyrannie of the deuill, with his highe arme, that is to saye, by his sonne, whome Elsaye the Prophete cap. 53. calleth the arme of the Lorde.

iii. The sufferance of God towards sinners.

Thirdly, he sayth, God suffered their maners fourtie yeares in the wilderness. Herein is noted a marueylous, and more than fatherly bearing and tenderneſſe, ſuch as no mortall man woulde uſe towards his only ſonne, or ſeruaunt moſt profytable vnto him. This thing well appeareth, if we read the ſtorie of Moſes. Howe often reade we, they murmured againſt Moſes, howe often roſe they ſediciouſly againſt him, howe often went they about to murder him? But to let paſſe the thinges they did againſt Moſes, what did they not commit againſt God himſelfe? They forgate his commaundements and made a Calfe, and chaunged the glory of God immortall into the ſimilitude of an Ore that eateth haye. How often preferred they the ſeruitude of Egypt, before the benefyte of their glorious deliuey? how often did they tempt the will and power of God? yet God bare with their incurable malice, although they daily deſerued with newe puniſhments to be deſtroyed. This might ſeeme a wonderfull meekeneſſe of God, if we daylye founde not the like. For what daye or houre paſſeth, in the which we prouoke not the iudgement of God againſt vs, eyther in wordes, deedes, or thoughts and wicked deſires? Yet the Lorde ſpareth vs, as though he had not thunderboltes and diuers other weapons at hande, wherewith to puniſhe and ſtrike vs. For he knoweth whereof we be made to uſe the wordes of y^e Prophet and remembreth that we are but duſt. Yet leaſt any man might thinke he maye hereby ſinne without checke, let vs note that this lenitie of God ſerued but hereto onely, becauſe he woulde not deſtroy the whole Nation, according to their deſertes. In the meane while, he grievouſly puniſhed them that were incurable, and woulde not repent. For none of them entred into the lande of promiſe, but were ouerthrowne in the wilderness with many plagues, in ſomuch that God neyther ſpared Aaron nor Moſes, becauſe they alſo had bene occaſions of offence vnto the people.

Pſal. 103.

iii. The poſſeſſion of the lande of promiſe.

Deut. 6.

Fourthly, he rehearſeth the inheritance of the lande of promiſe, which God gaue by lot to the people of the Jewes, hauing fyrſt deſtroyed ſeauen mightie Nations. This is at large ſet forth in the booke of Iofue. And Moſes diligently ſetteth forth that benefyte of God, where he ſayeth: when the Lorde thy God hath brought thee into the lande, which he ſware vnto thy fathers, Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, and giueth thee great and goodlye Cities, which thou buildedſt not, houſes full of all maner of goods, which thou fylledſt not, and welles digged which thou diggedſt not, vineyardes and Olyue trees which thou plantedſt not. &c. Which wordes as they marueylouſly amplify the liberalitie of God: ſo they might cauſe God to be thought vnrighteous and cruell, vnleſſe the cauſes be well conſidered, for the which theſe Nations were caſt out. Moſes reciteth them in other places, where he forbiddeth wandring and promiſcuous luſtes, inceſt, ydolatrie, ſorcerie, and enchauntements, and ſuch other curious artes, and addeth: Thou ſhalt not doe after the maner of this Nation which I caſt out before thee, for all theſe thinges haue they done, wherfore I haue abhorred them. &c. See Leuit. 20 and. 18. Deut. 18. Therefore for theſe offences theſe Nations were deſtroyed, wherewithall when the Iſraelites alſo were deſyled, we reade that God caſt them of alſo:

so that no man can in this case accuse God epyther of vnrightheousnesse, or of overmuch seueritie.

Fifthly, he setteth forth the benefyte of a common weale gouerned by good lawes. For God did not onely giue vnto them the lande, but also Judges to gouerne and defend them against the tyrannie of their enemies. And here is to be marked a manifest errour, which through the negligence of Stationers and Printers hath depraued the numbers. For it is written, that after Moses and the distribution of the lande, the Judges ruled foure hundred and fiftie yeares, whereas by infallible computation can be gathered but three hundred yeares onely, which Paule was not ignorant of. For it is euident that from the people of Israels going out of Egypt, vntill the building of Salomons Temple, which beganne in the fourth yeare of his reigne, were but fower hundredeth and fower score yeares. From these take the fortie yeares that Moses ledde the people in the wildernesse, and the fortie yeares of Samuel and Saule, and as many of Dauid, with the fower yeares of Salomons reigne, and then shall remayne three hundred and sixe and fiftie yeares, in the which the Judges gouerned the common weale of Israel. In these are declared two argumentes of Gods goodnesse. For in all that time of the Judges, they deserued not so fewe times as once to be destroyed, and yet were still saued. Moreouer, when they desired a king, despising that forme of common weale which was the best of all other, giuen them of God, God did not set ouer them any forreine tyrant, but gaue them Saule to be their king, one of their owne brethren, and one of the least regarded Trybes, least the power of the newe king shoulde be to great and intollerable at the beginning. Yea, the Lorde tooke in good part, and did well interpretate their inconsiderate rashnesse. For so he brought the kingdome to Iuda, out of whose Princely stocke Iacob prophesied that the Messias shoulde come. But of this shall be intreated hereafter. At this present, let vs consider, that the institution of a common weale, is to be numbred among the speciall benefytes of God. For where men naturally shunne to be corrected, and yet without discipline it is impossible, to leade a quiet and safe life: it is a worke of Gods power and goodnesse, to haue common weales and Magistrates ordeyned, which thing it behoueth them to consider, which through Gods gift enioy peace and good lawes: least while they shew themselves vnkinde towardes God, they cause God to giue them kings in his wrath, as the Prophete testifieth he did to the Jewes. But chiefly let Christians acknowledge their felicitie, for whome God hath prepared the fruition of the heauenly kingdome in Iesus Christ, the most victorious and immortall king, to whome bee praise, honour, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

b. The ordinance of common weale and kingdom

1. Reg. 6.

Genes. 49.

Hose. 13.

The.lxxxx.Homelie.

AND when hee was put downe, he set vp Dauid to bee their King, of whom he reported, saying: I haue found Dauid the son of Iesse, a man after mine owne heart, which shall fulfyll all my will. Of this mannes seede hath God according as he had promised, brought forth to Israel, a sauour, one Iesus, when Iohn had first preached before his comming the baptisme of re-

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penaunce to Israel: And when Iohn had fulfilled his course, he sayde, whom ye thinke I am, the same I am not. But beholde there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feete I am not worthy to vnlose.



The Apostle Paule in this Sermon of his, laboureth altogether to bring the Jewes, from their vaine and superstitious trust in the lawe, to the wholesome fayth of Iesus Christ. But where they so gloried in certaine prerogatiues, wherewith God had adourned their Nation, that they thought they had neede of none other Sauour, in the fyrst part of his sermon, he beateth downe this affiance, and teacheth that the fathers had not of their owne merite, but of Gods mere fauour, whatsoeuer goodnesse was in them, and that for the Messias sake, which was to be bozne of their stocke. And hereof he leaueth to euery wise man to consider, that this Messias ought to be taken holde of and kept by constant fayth, vntil they will altogether fall from the grace of God, and their former dignitie. Furthermore, he endeth this fyrst part of his Sermon, with a diligent rehearfall of the olde benefytes of God, in euery of the which appeareth the goodnesse and bountie of Gods grace, which as it chose the fathers at the beginning, so he saued them beyonde all their desertes, where he might haue oftentimes cast them of, and destroyed them. And he bringeth the hystorie vnto the time of Saule, who for this cause he chiefly maketh mention of that he may the easilier come vnto Dauid, whome the Scriptures call the father of the Messias that was promised. And in this place he declareth how the kingdome was translated vnto Dauid: then by that occasion he taketh in hand the other part of his sermon, wherein he proueth that Christ is the Messias, whose office and whole worke of our redemption he setteth out more at large.

The translation of the kingdome of Iurie vnto Dauid.

The translation of the kingdome maketh much for Paules purpose. For therein appeared a singuler token of Gods goodnesse, in that he set not a tyrant ouer them, which so boldly durst alter the state of their comon weale, but when he was gone, gaue them a very good king, the father of the Messias promised, yea boughsased to turne their follye and rathnesse otherwyse than they deserued, to their commoditie. And that Gods benefyte might the more appeare, he reciteth a praise of Dauid pronounced by God himselfe. Howbeit, we haue somewhat to saye, both of Saules putting from the kingdome, and of Dauids placing in his rourne (which things it is like Paule discoursed more at large) because they serue greatly for our information. And fyrst, for that no man shall thinke that God delighteth in transferring of kingdomes from one to another, like a tyrant: the holy scripture must be perused, which very diligently reherfeth the causes why Saule was reiected. The chiefe of them was, the proude contempt of Gods word, which made him more desirous of his owne glorie, than of Gods. Hereof we haue examples in the fyrst of Samuel cap.13. and.15. Upon this followed monstrous and horrible dedes. For he did not onely attempt to persecute Dauid whom he saue God allowed and liked, but also went about to put Ionathas hys owne sonne to death, and murdered the Priests of God most cruelly. Furthermore, he seeketh counsaile of a witch, and shewed the token of a reprobate

bate

bate minde, even in the ende of his lyfe, by killing himselfe. This example is very notable, which all men, but chieflie such as beare rule and office, ought often to consider, that they maye vnderstande howe both their owne wealth, and the wealth of their common weales, depende vpon God onely, and therefore let them giue eare vnto the worde of God, let them set forth his glozy, and serue him (as Dauid sayth) in feare, and reuerency and humbly kysse the sonne of God Iesus Christ, whome he hath appointed king of kings. But bicause Kings and Princes count it but a sport now a dayes in contempt of gods word to turne all vpset down, at their pleasure, no man must marueyle, that they & their kingdomes so miserably perish. For of Christ it was prophesied: the nation and kingdome that will not serue thee, shall perish.

But let vs see Dauid, whome God adourneth with a notable commendation, which Paule gathereth partly of the.lxxxix. Psalme, and partly of the.iiij. Chapter of the fyrst booke of Samuel, and he addeth nothing vnto the word of God, but that he calleth him the sonne of Iesse, who was a Bethlehemite, and a man of a base and poore estate, and which got his living by cattell and grasing, as the Scripture declareth. This maketh for the setting forth of Gods goodnesse, who would promote a man of base degree, and the yongest of all his brethren, to so high a dignitie, and also warneth them not to glozy ouermuch in Dauid, seeing he was so exalted, through the mere grace of God. And surely if we will credit Dauid himselfe, he is content to confesse the same. For when he heard the promises of God touching the Messias that shoulde be borne of his stocke: we reade that he cryed, what am I o Lorde, or what is my house, that thou shouldest so greatly aduaunce me. &c. Moreover, as we sayd, Saule was put out of the kingdome bicause of his great pride, contempt, & disobedience towarde God: so Dauid is commended chieflie for that he fulfilled all the will of the Lorde. Whereof may be gathered a generall doctrine, that they are chieflie allowed of God which frame themselves to doe his will. For God is not delighted in sacrifices, so much as in obedience.

Howbeit, some woulde aske in this place, howe Dauid did all the will of the Lorde, considering he defyled himselfe with adultery and manslaughter, and being overcome with pride, tooke a generall muster of his people, contrary to the will of God. But hereto it maye easily be answered. First, when Dauid heard he shoulde be the father of the sauour promised, he tooke holde thereof by constant fayth, and therefore he coulde not displease God, hauing him in whome God was pleased. Then out of this fayth sprang all those vertues, wherein it is plaine, God is delighted. For this fayth made him humble, & greatly to esteeme the benefytes of God, as euen now was sayde. This fayth when at any time he fell through infyrmitie, rayzed him vp againe, and prouoked him to repentance. This fayth made him to loue and desire the worde of God, so that he preferred it before the honye and the hony combe. It was also a worke of faith, that he patiently coulde abide when he was rebuked by the worde: yea, he declared himselfe to be obedient to suffer whatsoeuer was enioyned him bicause of his sinnes. For when he hearde that Nathan the Prophete threatened him with the sword and with ciuill warres, he did not lightly shake him of, nor accuse him of sedition, but was contented thus onely to aunswere: I haue sinned agaynst the Lorde. And it was not the saying of a sluggish or lumpish minde, but of one

Psal.2.

E say. 60.

The prayse
of Dauid.

2. Sam. 7.

1. Sam. 15.

Howe Dauid
is sayde to
haue fulfilled
all the will of
God.

Psal. 19.

2.Sam.15.

2.Sam.16.

2.Sam.24.

hartily sorrowfull, and desiring to haue his offences forgiven, as we maye see in the .li. Psalme, which he made euen at that very time. And the thing it selfe declareth he nothing dissembled. For when by his sonne he was driven out of the Citie and kingdome, he sayde vnto Zadocke the Priest which brought him the arke: Carye the Arke of God againe into the Citie. If I shall fynde fauour in the eyes of the Lorde, he will bring me againe, and shewe mee both it and the Tabernacle thereof. But and if the Lorde thus say, I haue no lust vnto thee, beholde here I am, let him doe with mee, what seemeth good in his eyes. An argument of lyke minde it was, that he did not onely patiently suffer Semey rayling against him, but by his authoritie defended him, that he had no hurt. Where God also gaue him liberty, of thre plagues to choose whether he woulde, he answered: I am exceedingly troubled, let vs fall, I pray you into the hande of the Lord. &c. Furthermore, as the Hungell strake the people with grievous pestilence, he sayde: It is I that haue sinned, and I that haue done wickedly. But these sheepe what haue they done? Lette thine hande I pray thee, be against me and my fathers house. What can be more modest than this minde, what more godly, more tractable and meke: To say nothing in the meane while of those duties and loues which he shewed toward Saule, so many wayes iniurying him. With these thinges if a man compare the minde of Saule, boyling in ambition, pride, enuie, hatred, wrath, contempt of God, and outrageous stubbornesse, he shall easely perceyue what difference was betwene them. These things serue for the instruction of all men. For they teach vs what maner of men they ought to be, who desire to please God. For if they embrace Jesus Christ with true fayth, and desire to fulfill his commaundements, it shall come to passe, that the offences they haue made through the infirmitie of the fleshe, shall by Christs merite be supplied, and if they fall into any sinne, by repentance & through guiding of the spirite, they shall rise vp againe.

The second
part of the
Sermon teach-
ing howe
Jesus is
Christ.

Moreouer, Paule taking occasion of the storie of Dauid, passeth to the seconde part of his sermon, wherein he declareth that Jesus whome the Apostles preached, is the promised Saviour, for whose sake God in times past did so benefyte the fathers. And bicause he knewe he had to doe with the Jewes, the most grievous enemies of Christ, he proueth it by manye and strong arguments, of the which there are thre contayned in this place, which we will in order treate of.

1. Jesus is
borne of the
seede of Da-
uid, according
to promise.

The fyrst is, where he sayth, he shall be borne of that stocke, whence the Prophetes sayde he shoulde come, that is to say, of the seede of Dauid. But it woulde be long to recite all the promises, yea, superfluous, considering they were so common and ryse, that the Messias was commonly called the sonne of Dauid. Yet if any man desire more, let him reade the thinges written, 2.Sam.7. Psal.132. Esay.11. Ierem.23. &c. That Christ was borne of the seede of Dauid touching his manhode, Mathewe and Luke proue by a diligent Genealogie or Pedegree. And here we haue to marke, that he sayth, this Saviour was rayled by according to the promise. This part teacheth vs that he was giuen vnto vs also, according to the mere grace of God, and that it is to be attributed to no merites of man, that God hath sent his sonne to be our Saviour. For that the promise was made of fauour, Dauid himselfe confesseth, as erewhile we sawe. And if any man attribute this vnto Dauids modestie, he shall be conuincd by the promise that we reade was

made

made to our fyrst fathers, who had deserved death, and fledde away to hyde themselves from God. And Chryst himselfe truly referreth all this saluation to the grace of God, where he sayth Iohn. 3. So God loued the world that he gaue his only begotten sonne. &c. Which words the Apostle expoundeth & writeth: Herein is loue, not that we loued God, but that he loued vs. &c. Here also appeareth the infallible truth of God, which must be extended to all promises, that we maye herein fet fyne comfort in all kinde of temptations. For he that woulde not deceyue vs, when his sonnes death laye vpon it, howe shoulde he in other things deceyue vs?

The seconde argument is, that he sayeth he shall come in such sort and wise, as the Prophetes prophesied the promised Mefsias shoulde come. For he had a forerunner, such as is described. Esay. 40. Malach. 3. and. 4. Chapters. That was Iohn which preached the baptisme of repentance, whereby he prepared the mindes of men duly to receyue Chryst. Marke the Euangelist bleseth the same argument, where he writeth, the Gospell of Iesu Chryst beganne, as it was foretolde by the Prophetes. In the meane season it is worthy to be obserued, that it was necessarye to haue a forerunner, who by repentance, which he declared both by preaching and sacraments, shoulde prepare a people vnto Chryst. This proueth the corruption of our nature, whereby it cometh to passe, that we cannot attaine to saluation, except we be wholye chaunged and regenerated. Furthermore, it confuteth them which thinke that Chrystes doctrine is the seede of licentious liuing, seeing none cometh vnto him but he that is worthily prepared by true repentance. But bicause we haue alreadye often intreated hereof, and haue freshe occasion still offered to speake of the same, it shall suffice briefly thus to haue noted it.

The thirde argument he taketh of testimonie. For he alleageth the testimonie of Iohn, not for that Chrystes cause consisteth or stayeth vppon mannes testimonie, but for that Iohn was of suche authoritie among the Jewes, that he was commonly taken for a Prophete, as may be sene Matthew. 21. and in Iosephus which sayth, that the death of Iohn was cause of the ouerthrow that Aretes gaue vnto Herode. In which sense Chryst in another place bleseth his testimonie Iohn. 5. This man (sayeth Paule) where some thought he was the Mefsias, to put the people out of all suspicion, sayeth: whome thinke you that I am? I am not Chryst, for behold, there cometh one after me. &c. These things are more at large declared in Iohn. 1. Luc. 3. and Math. 3 Chapters. Herein is declared what the propertie of the people is in their iudgements of Gods seruants. For eyther they attribute to much vnto them, or vtterlye contemne them, for meane is there none. For they that at fyrst thought Iohn was the Mefsias, suffered him not long after to be the pray of a most cruell tyrant. Example whereof we shall see in those of Lystra in the next Chapter. Iohn teacheth vs by his example, what trustynesse the godlye ought to vse in setting forth the glorie of Chryst. For they dandle not the dulnesse and folly of the people, thereby to haue themselves the more magnified: but that Chryst may haue his whole glory, they vse to abase themselves, and to thinke themselves the worst of all other. Yea, they thinke their glory consisteth in this, if by their meane Iesus Chryst may euerywhere be glorified. And if Iohn which was the holpest man that euer was bozne of a woman, be no body in comparison of Chryst, who then

Genes. 3.

1. Iohn. 4.

¶ Iesus had
a forerunner,
as was fore-
told.

¶ The testi-
mony of Iohn
Baptist concern-
ing Chryst.

Iosephus in
his. xviij.
booke of an-
tiquities cap.
and Eusebius
Cæsariens. re-
porteth the
same out of
him in his
booke of his
ecclesiasticall
hystorie and
xij. chap.

percepueth not that the whole prayse of our redemption is to be ascribed to Christ alone: The example of Peter and Iohn haue declared the same, whereof was spoken in the thirde and tenth Chapters. It is our dutie to trust in Christ onely, and to acknowledge him to be the Sauour that was promised in the beginning: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.lxxxxj.Homelie.

YE men and brethren, children of the generation of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is this worde of saluation sent. For the inhabitants of Ierusalem and their rulers, because they knewe him not, nor yet the voyces of the Prophetes, which are reade euery Sabboth daye, they haue fulfilled them in condemning him. And when they founde no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pylate to kill him. And when they had fulfilled all that were written of him, they tooke him downe from the tree, and put him in a sepulchre, but God ray sed him againe from death the thirde day, and he was seene many dayes of them, which came vp with him from Galilee to Ierusalem, which are his witnessses vnto the people.

That that all the Scripture both of the olde and newe Testament with one consent declareth, that same in this sermon Paule both plainly and constantly teacheth, namely, that Iesus Christ is the onely redeemer and sauour of mankind, in whom alone we haue blessing, righteousnesse, saluation, and life. But because he had to doe with the Jewes, whome he knewe still withstoode Christ with great obstinacie, therefore he handleth this cause with great grauitie. And first he proposeth thre arguments to proue the same, vnto these he adiopneth other which he so putteth forth, that therewithall he also aunswereth those obiections which might pull the hearers from embracing the sayth in Christ. For first he testifieth that Christ pertayneth vnto them, least any man might thinke hee spake of a matter pertayning nothing to y purpose. Then he putteth the offence away that men might take, because Christ suffred on the crosse. And last of all, he alleageth and constantlye proueth the resurrection of Christ, which is the chiefe argument of his godheade. We shall speake of eche of them in order, as much as God shall permit vs.

The Gospell
ought first to
be preached
to the Jewes

Yee men and brethren (sayth he) children of the generation of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the worde of this saluation sent. This is a graue little pze face, wherewith he meaneth to prouoke them to think that the doctrine of Christ belongeth vnto them. For it is like there were diuers in those dayes, which thought it vnfitting for their profession, to haue ought to do with controuersies rising about faith and religion, such as are now a days euerywhere to be seene, who by this opinion go about to purchase to themselues great prayse & glory. But Paule denieth this, & that he might y more easily perswade them the truth, he calleth them by a worshipfull name and title. For besides that, after the common vsage he calleth them Men and brethren, he addeth thereto, children of the generation of

Abra-

Abraham: in which name by reason of the couenant and promises of God, he knewe they greatly reioyced. Yet that they shoulde not thinke the prerogative of the Nation sufficient, he admonisheth them also of their dutye, where he sayth: and whosoever among you feareth God. For by this meanes he teacheth them, that they are then the true and right children of Abraham, that ioyne vnto outward profession, the feare of God and sincere study of religion, whereof Christ also in the .viij. of Iohn disputeth. Then he proceedeth, saying: To you is the worde of this saluation sent. As though he should say: If you will be taken for the children of Abraham, and the sincere worshippers of God, you must by no meanes despise the doctrine of saluation, which is offered vnto you, by the singuler benefyte of God. Yet Paule speaketh not this in such meaning, as though he thought the Gentyles still excluded from the fellowship of saluation, whome the holy ghost had appointed him to call. But he hath a respect vnto the counsell of God, who as he set forth the promises of Christ vnto the fathers of the Jewes, and called them out from others, as a peculiar people vnto himselfe: so would he first haue the saluation giuen vs in Christ, preached vnto them, as Christ in the Gospell evidently testifieth, when he first sent out the Apostles, forbidding them to go into the way of the Gentyles. But when the bayle whereby the Gentyles were deuided from the Jewes, was remooued away by the death of Christ, then also was the doore opened vnto them, that being made the children of Abraham by fayth, they might enter into the same inheritance of saluation with the Jewes. Therefore Paule admonisheth the Jewes of the prerogative that God did giue them, least they should vnadvisedly reiect the knowledge of Christ, as nothing appertaining vnto them. And this example of Paule ought all Ministers of the worde to followe, remembring that they must so preache the worde of God, that the hearers must vnderstande howe the things spoken doe belong vnto them. For except they so doe, the worde of God shall strike their eare, like a song whose sounde is in bayne, as wee reade in Ezechiel the .xxiiiij. Chapter. So therefore let them inculcate the commaundementes of God, that all men may be assured that the obseruation thereof belongeth vnto them. So let them preach the iudgements of God, that they that commit the lyke, may know they haue to looke for the like. For then is the worde of God rightly deuided and cut, when euery body may learne thereby to take what serueth eyther for their instruction, consolation, or erudition. Furthermore, it is a singuler prayse of the Gospell, that it is called the worde of saluation, in the which sense the Angell spake vnto Cornelius, as we before saue: Simon Peter shall speake wordes vnto thee, through which thou and thy house shall be saued. &c. Let it suffice here to admonish thus much: that their ingratitude is very enormous, which rayle at that worde, and that they are the greatest enemies of their owne saluation of all other.

From hence Paule commeth to the slander of the crosse, which he diligently putteth away, because they were ignorant of Christes mysteries, were offended with Christes death, not without a great cause. And chiefly it seemed an heynous matter, that the Priests at Ierusalem were the authors thereof. For Ierusalem was the sea of religion, priesthode, and doctrine, and from thence, according to auncient Prophecies, was the worde of saluation looked. Wherefore it coulde not chouse but seeme a great absurditie to

acknow-

Math. 10.

He answereth the blasphemie taken by the crosse.

Esay. 2.

acknowledge him for a Saviour, whome the chiefe of Ierusalem put to the death of the Crosse, as a schismatike and a decepuer, and to embrace that doctrine that was not receyued at Ierusalem. For such was the authoritie of the holy Citie (for so the Prophetes called Ierusalem) that many thought it impossible for them to erre in matters of faith and religion. But Paule so aunswereth this offence, that he teacheth the example of that Citie, is rather to be auoyded than to be folowed, least they might offend God through lyke ingratitude and impiety. And there be fower things which he bringeth to this ende.

1 The priests
were ignorant
of Christ and
the scriptures

Mala. 2.

Iohn. 5.

2. Cor. 3.

First he sayth: they that dwelt at Ierusalem, and their Rulers, because they knewe him not, condemned him. Therefore he sayth ignorance was the cause of their so heynous an offence, as also is sayd. 1. Cor. 13. Who will thinke it a thing worthy to be folowed, when he heareth men sinne of ignorance? And yet this is not to be counted such ignorance, as excuse the dede. For they are sayde also to be ignorant of the scriptures, yea, of those common Scriptures, which vsed to be reade every Sabbath day. But it is a foule thing, and not worthe to be pardoned, for a Priest to be ignorant in the Scripture, considering God commaundeth to search the knowledge of the lawe at his hande. Furthermore, he taketh from them a great part of their excuse, in that Christ admonished them to search the scriptures. But Paule in another place sayth, that this was the onely cause of their ignorance, for that they were occupied in reading Moses and the Prophetes, without the helpe of Christ. For this was that bayle, that was the onely cause that they could not see Moses face, that is to say, the true meaning of the lawe. Seeing therefore they were blind guides (as Christ also calleth them Math. 23.) they are not to be folowed. We are here taught, that we must not alwayes cleave to the iudgements and examples of notable men, but rather trie and examine all things after the rule of the scripture, afore we imitate them. For if they were so fowly deceyued, which had the greatest dignitie among the people of God by his appointment, what shall we hope of others? They are also confuted, which when we bring forth the worde of God, bring vs the examples of Princes and great estates. For the question is not what men doe, but what is done, according or contrarie to the worde of God. Moreouer, we are taught that the reading of the Scripture neuer so much preuaileth not, if we well vnderstande not the meaning of the Scripture. Moses & the Prophetes were read of ordinary among the Jewes in all their sinagoges. But whereas they were deceyued in the affiance of their owne righteousness, they knew not the ende of y^e lawe, which was Iesus Christ and being ignorant thereof, they fulfilled the Scriptures, presumptuously putting him to death, whom Moses & the Prophetes did prophetic should be their saviour. We see y^e same hath come to passe these many yeres in the papacie or Popedom. The vnlearned Monkes and Priests reade and sing the holy scriptures. Yet Christ whome the scriptures teach, is despised of a great many: and Antichrist is worshipped and glorified, whome the scriptures with one consent warne vs to beware of. And other cause of so fylthy an error is there none, than for that men being puffed bp with a Jewishe affiance of their owne works, are not able to see the righteousness of Christ while they go about to set bp their owne righteousness. See Rom. 10.

4. The

Secondly, he alleageth the authoritie of Gods prouidence, declaring that

that for this cause no manne ought to be offended at the death of Christ, because he suffered nothing, but that the Prophets, to whome the holye ghost long before reuealed the counsailes and ordinaunce of God, prophesied he should suffer. Wherefore the Priests when they vnderstode not the scripture, yet they fulfilled them, in that they presumed to condemne and put Christ to death. And it is no doubt but Paule in this place, brought forth the oracles of the Scripture, which are extant euerywhere touching Christs passion. In that he sayth the Prophesies were fulfilled by the wicked enemies of Christ, we learne that the very wicked also are the instruments of God, by whome oftentimes he bleseth to bring his ordinances and deuises to passe. And yet they are not therfore to be excused, because they doe that that God will haue to be done. For where they like Bedlems rage in impietie against God, and go about to hinder, and not to set forwarde his ordinances, they are in the fault, and God is to be praised and glorified, which can moderate and order their audacitie and boldenesse so well. Also his inuincible power and infallible veritie appeareth in these examples. For if his deuises take effect through the meane of his very enemies also, then must they needes stande fast for euer. Therefore they whose infirmitie is feared with the cruell deuises of the Princes of this worlde, let them seeke comfort hereat.

But whereas it might notwithstanding be objected that it was scarce credible, that God would appoynt him to be our Sauour, who was made away by so slaunderous a death, and such as was cursed euen by the lawe: therefore in the thirde part he proueth he was innocent and guiltlesse, and sheweth that his kinde of death must not be so much considred, as his cause: when they founde by him (sayth he) no cause of death, yet desired they Pylate to kill him. These things might haue bene declared more at large, as it is like Paule did, because he spake vnto them which suspected all Christs doing. Let it suffice vs to holde fast the scope and ende of Paule, that is, howe no man ought to be offended at Christs death, which he suffered being an innocent, forasmuch as many times the holiest men of all, vse to be put to death, both vntoorthily and vniustly. Also the true vse of Christs innocencie must be well weyghed which consisteth in the purgation or clensing of our sinnes. For if Christ had not bene free and cleare of all sinnes, he coule neuer haue bene able to haue satisfied for our sinnes. For howe can he make others cleane, that is himselfe vncleane? Or how should one being indebted himselfe, paye other mennes debtes? Therefore it behoued Christ should be innocent, that we might knowe howe he who had deserued no death for his part suffered death for vs. Esay maketh mention herof, where he expoundeth the mysterie of our redemption, cap. 53. And hereto belongeth that saying of Paule: God made him to be sinne for vs, which knewe no sinne, that we by his meanes should be the righteousnesse which before God is allowed. And this is the chiefe cause why the Euangelistes be so earnest in setting forth the innocencie of Christ. Then if none ought to be offended with Christs death, because he suffered innocently, by the same reason the vntoorthy and vniust slaughters of the Saintes ought to offende no body, whereby they are made partakers of Christs crosse, to thende to be glorified with him.

Fourthly, least anye man should thinke that Christ was overcome by the

Priests fulfilled the scriptures.

17. Christ was put to the death of the crosse innocently.

2. Cor. 5.

Rom. 8.
2. Tim. 2.

119. The

Priestes en-
terprised
coude not
hurt Christ.

Iohn.10.

The resur-
rection of
Christ is
proued.

Luc. 10.

1. Cor. 15.

the force or power of his enemies, and therefore shoulde deny that he were a sauour or reneger, he teacheth that he receyued no losse or harme, by the wicked enterprises of the Priestes. They perfourmed all the thinges which were prophesied of him, while they killed him on the Crosse, and pierced his side with a speare, and at length took him down from the crosse and layd him in a sepulchre. But for all this he was of neuer the lesse power or glory. For God (as he foresaw) rayled him vppon death, so that now he liueth for euer, in a glorified body, where they enuyed him this miserable and corruptible life. But let it here offende no man, that Christes buriall is permitted to his wicked enemies, the hono: whereof the Euangelistes ascribe to his faythfull disciples Ioseph and Nichodemus. For Paule here speaketh howe they were not contented with his ordinary buriall, but caused the grauestone to be sealed with Pylates signet, and gotte souldiours to watch him, and forceably to keepe him downe in his graue, thinking that they of their owne power had killed him vpon the crosse, and were ignorant that he layde downe his lyfe of his owne voluntary. This diligent description of his buriall, maketh for the more certaintie and truth of his resurrection. For thus it appeareth there coulde be no frowde or decept in the matter, and that it was a false rumour that the Priestes caused to be rayled by the souldiours, being well bribed with money, that his Disciples came and stole away his body. In the meane season we may take a generall comfort hereof, that the enemies of Christ fyght against him in vaine. The same may also be applied to his members. They haue many and cruell enemies. Yet howsoeuer they rage they haue no power vpon the bodies, no not so much as vpon the heare of the faithfull, vnlesse God permit it. Yea, although they haue power to take awaye our liues, yet haue they no power to take awaye the glorious resurrection of our bodies, nor the fruition of heavenly lyfe, which Christ hath prepared for those that be his. Let vs therefore in times of persecution comfort our selues oftentimes with these meditations.

Whereouer, where Paule is come to the resurrection of Iesus Christ, he maketh a diligent assertion and prooue of the same, bycause thereby the deuine Maiestie of Christ is most evidently of all others declared, and in the same, (as sayth the same Apostle. 1. Cor. 15.) consisteth the chiefe hope of our redemption and saluation. And for bicause he knewe many denied the same, therefore he alleageth dyuers wytnesses thereof. Hee was seene (sayth he) many dayes of them which came with him from Galyley to Ierusalem, who are his witnesses vnto the people. He speaketh of those which the Euangelistes say accompanied Christ, in his last iourney, of whome it appeareth there was no small number, bicause Christ appointed seuentie of them to prepare the waye for him by preaching. What if we thinke that they were of those fife hundred, vnto whome Paule sayth, Christ appeared after his resurrection. Verily, whosoever they were, their fayth is worthy to be prayled, in that they were bolde, to beare Christ wytnesse agaynst so many of his enemies. And he produceth these men before the Apostles, not that their dignitie so deserued, but bicause their credite was lesse suspected with the Infidelles, and for that they shoulde not thinke, but Christ had more wytnesses of his resurrection, than the Apostles. Then straight way he alleageth the testimonie of the Apostles with great grauitie, wher- vnto he also ioyne the Oracles of the Prophets, wherof shall be spoken

in

in the Sermon following. In the meane whyle it becommeth vs to acknowledge the goodnesse and truth of God, which would haue the thinges wherein our saluation chiefly consisteth, so certaine and vndoubted. Let vs therfore embrace our sauour with constant fayth, who rose agayne from death, conquered the tyrannie of death, hath restored vs to the libertie of the sonnes of God, which is the onely begotten sonne of God, Iesus Christ, the true and euerlyuing God: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glozy for euer. Amen.

The.lxxxij.Homelie.

AND we declare vnto you, how that the promise which was made vnto the fathers, God hath fulfilled vnto their children, euen vnto vs, in that he rayfed vp Iesus againe, euen as it is written in the first Psalme: Thou art my sonne, this daye haue I begotten thee. As concerning that he rayfed hym vp from death, nowe no more to returne to corruption, he sayde on this wyse: The holy promyses made to Dauid, will I giue faythfully to you. Wherefore he sayth also in an other place. Thou shalt not suffer thyne holy one to see corruption, for Dauid after he had in his tyme fulfilled the wyll of God, fell on sleepe, and was layde vnto his fathers, and sawe corruption. But he whom God rayfed againe, sawe no corruption.



Aule in the second part of his Sermon which he made in the Synagoge at Antioche, teacheth that Iesus whome the Apostles preached, was the true sonne of god, and that sauour of mankinde, that was promysed, for whose sake God so benifyted the fathers. Bicause of the Jewes, he handleth this matter verie grauelye, and proueth with firme and strong argumentes, that which he goeth about to teach. For he declareth both the stock of Iesus Christ, and the maner of his coming, is agreeable with the Oracles of the olde Prophetes. Then he alleageth the testimony of Iohn, who was of such authoritie with the Jewes, that it was not lawfull to speake against him. But where he knew the crosse of Christ was their greatest stumbling stocke, he sheweth that the Prophetes foretolde therof, and that it was no derogation to Christ, bicause he rose againe from death, despight of his enemies. Moreouer, when he commeth to speake of the resurrection, he defendeth the same most diligently, and at large, both bicause the same is a most euident argument of Iesus Christs true diuinitie, and also bicause the chiefe hope of our resurrection dependeth thereon. And first bicause it should not seeme that none knew and testified hereof but the Apostles, he produceth Galyleyans for wytnesses, who also sawe Christ, after he was risen agayne from death. And now he ioyneth to their testimonie, the Oracles of the Prophetes and Apostles.

He alleageth the testimonie of the Apostles, speaking as in the name of all the Apostles. We preach vnto you (sayth he) the promise made vnto the fathers, how God hath perfourmed the same vnto their children, that is to say, to vs, in that he rayfed vp Iesus againe. &c. And no man must take such a

¶ Cccc.i.

grauē

1. The testimonie of the Apostles concerning christ and his resurrection.

1. Cor. 1.
Iohn. 1.
Iohn. 14. 8.
Rom. 8.

Luke. 22.
Iohn. 17.

1. Cor. 15.

The doctrine
of the Apostles
is not newe.

Iohn. 5.
Luc. 24.

Math. 13.

The truth of
Gods promi-
ses.

graue saying of the Apostle, as insolent and arrogant, both because Paule bleseth it, and Christ ordeyned the Apostles to be his wytnesses, and also for that he and Barnabas tooke this present ambassage in hande by the speciall commaundement of the holy ghost, as was declared in the beginning of the chapter. Therefore he setteth forth the commaundements of the Apostleship committed vnto him plainly and with worthy grauitie, whereof this is the summe, howe God gaue vnto their posteritie all that before times he promised vnto the fathers. After which sense and meaning, in the seconde Epistle to the Corinthians the first chapter, he sayth: for all the promises of God by Iesus Christ are yea, and are in him. Amen, that is to say, are by him fulfilled. So that it appeareth they are greatly deceyued which glorie in the promises and grace of God, and yet reiect Christ, in whom onely they are ratified vnto vs. For whatsoeuer things appertaine to the saluation of mankinde, they are giuen vnto vs in him. For in him is that righteousness, which defendeth vs before the iudgement seate of God. He is made vnto vs of God wisdom, satisfaction, redemption, and sanctification. In him is lyfe. He is the way, the truth, and the light. In him is giuen vs the spirite of adoption, by whome we cry Abba, father. By him we are made heyres and partakers of the kingdome of heauen, as he sayth himselfe: I appoint vnto you a kingdome, as my father hath appointed vnto me. &c. Againe: Father I will that they which thou hast giuen mee, be with me, where I am. And although these things for the most part were accomplished vpon the aultar of the crosse, euen when Christ being ready to yelde by the ghost, sayde, it is finished: yet in his resurrection chiefly appeareth the effect of them. For thereby, he testifieth that the sting of death is made blunt and broken, and that therefore death is spoyled and disarmed as Paule teacheth at large. Therefore the Apostle now maketh mention of them, after he had begunne to speake of the resurrection. But here are certaine thinges diligently to be obserued, before we go from this place.

First we preach (sayth he) the promise made vnto the fathers. Ergo, the Apostles are Authoꝝ of no newe and straunge doctrine, but teache that waie of saluation, which was once promysed by God vnto the fathers. For this cause Christ alleageth the testimonies of Moses and of the Prophets. And Peter heretofore sayde, that all the Prophets bare wytnesse of Christ. By these is proued the worthinesse of our sayth, & the certaintie of our saluation gotten by Christ. Moreover, here appeareth the difference betwene vs and the fathers of the olde Testament. That saluation was promised vnto them, which is perfourmed to vs in Christ. They also looked for the fulfylling of that which we beleue is fulfilled. Furthermore, they had certaine figures and tokens of their redemption to come, whereby to exercise and feede their faith: But God hath prepared for vs sacramentes and seales of our redemption and saluation, which are accomplished and finished. To conclude, our eyes see, and our eares heare that which the holie fathers in times past greatly desyred to see and heare. As these things confirme our sayth: so they ought to stirre by our mindes to be thankfull, that we seme not ingratefull to despise the saluation giuen vs, the hope and expectation whereof, kept the fathers in times passed, in all kinde of dutifullnesse, in the middle of all their aduersities.

Furthermore, the truth and infallible trust of Gods promises, may here-

in be scene. For he so perfourmeth the promises made to the fathers vnto their children, that he rather would haue his sonne lyue poorly and not regarded in this world, and at length to suffer shameful death, than to breake his promise. Where also other circumstaunces are to be considered of vs, all which, it appeareth to agree with the promises of God, & the Oracles of the Prophets. For at the tyme promysed, the sonne of God came to take fleshe vpon him, when now the fourth Monarchie flourished, and when the Scepter was taken from Iuda. He was also borne of a woman, hys mother yet remayning a Virgin. The place where he was borne was Bethleem, foreshewed by the oracle of the Prophet. The myracles wrought by him, were such as Esay sayde should be done in his kingdome. cap. 53. As touching his death and passion, resurrection & ascension, what needeth to speake, seeing that in them is fulfilled according to the letter, all the things which are red. Psal. 22. 41. 68. Ie. 53. 63. Of the effect of these thinges, which God sometime promised by his Prophetes, we spake before. It is truely therefore sayde of Paule, that God hath perfourmed whatsoeuer thinges were in times past promised to the fathers. Here ought we to fet argumentes of consolation in our temptations, that we doubt not of Gods promise in perfourming of his helpe and fauour, who we heare hath so faythfully perfourmed those thinges, which coulde not be perfourmed, but by hys sonne, sent into the worlde, and into the darkenesse of death.

But let vs returne vnto Paule, which confirmeth by the Oracles of the Prophets, that which he spake of Christ with so great authoritie. Amongst which the chiefe place is attributed to Dauid, who in the fyrst Psalm (which now a dayes is counted the seconde) he sayth prophesied of Christ. And he bringeth one verse of the Psalm onely, yet so as he calleth to their remembrance the whole Psalm, which though some go about to expounde of Dauid, yet in dedde it contayneth a manifest prophesie of y^e kingdome of Christ, forasmuch as diuers thinges therein can by no meanes be applied vnto Dauid. For the Prophete by suggestion of the spirite, sheweth that Christ shall haue many and cruel enemies, desirous to ouerthrow his kingdome, and to pull downe all his authoritie, but their enterpryses shall be in vaine, because Christ shall overcome them all. The cause of all which he alleageth to be Gods decre, saying: Thou art my sonne, this day haue I begotten thee. Aske of me, and I will giue thee the Gentyles for thine enheritance. Paule expoundeth this place of Christes resurrection, because that hereby God openly declared him to be his sonne, euen when his wicked enemies chiefly conspired against him. For not long before he hearde those blasphemous wordes: If thou be the sonne of God, come downe from the crosse. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come downe from the Crosse, and we will beleue him. &c. Yea, being compassed about with the cruell terrores of death, he cryed out: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And shortly after he was so closed in his graue, that Pylate the Romane President in the Emperours name and authoritie sealed the graue stone with his ring, & set souldiours to watch it, that he shoulde not ryle agayne: who would then haue thought he had bene the sonne of God, vpon whome the wicked had such authority? But euen the same daye God begate him, that is to say, declared him to be his sonne, whome yet otherwise he begate from euerlasting, and yet now seemeth he to forsake him & cast him of. For when his wicked enemies sayd:

Dani. 2.
Gene. 49.
Gene. 3.
Esa. 7.
Mich. 5.

2. The testimonies of the Prophets, of Christ, and his resurrection. Psal. 2.

The resur-
rection decla-
reth the glory
of the sonnes
of God.
Rom. 1.

1. Iohn. 3.

The place of
Esay. 55.

Christ is but
once onely of-
fered.

If thou be the sonne of God, come downe from the crosse: he would not haue him come downe, but did that that was more in rayling him bype againe from death, so that by their owne wordes he condemned them for wicked, and shewed in deede that Iesus Christ is his sonne. We haue furthermore to consider that the holy ghost proueth the kingdome of Christ, and his diuine maiestie, chiefly by his resurrection. For Paule in another place, speaking of Christ, sayth: who was declared to be the sonne of God with power, according to the spirit that sanctifieth, in that that he rose againe from death. For when death was overcome, it appeared vnto all men, that the Deuill also, which was the Lorde of death was overcome, which victorie was not a worke of mannes power, but of Gods maiestie. This thing must also be extended vnto Christs members. For where both he that sanctifyeth, and he that is sanctified, are all one, our glory also which is due to the children of God, shall appeare at length in our resurrection. We crie now also Abba father, and carpe the pledge of saluation in our heartes, which is the holpe ghost, and be euen now the children of God, but yet it appeareth not what we shall be. But we knowe that when Christ appeareth at the later daye, wee shall be like vnto him. This is the cause that Christ calleth that day the regeneration Math. 19. not bicause we are then fyrst made y children of God, but for that they that seme in this worlde to be forsaken of God, & enuyed, shall at that day be declared to be the children of God, See Wisedome. 5 Let vs herewith comfort our selfe in aduersitie against the vniust iudgement that the worlde hath of vs, and casting away the desire of earthly glory, lette vs aspire to the glory to come, which is heauenly.

Secondly, he produceth Esay, by whome God speaking amongst other things, of the benefytes that he woulde giue vs in Christ, sayth: I will make an euerlasting couenant with you, euen the sure mercies of Dauid. Furthermore, Paule folowing the common translation of the Grekes, expoundeth this word mercy, by this word holy, & not bnaptly, bicause he meaneth Christ, vpon whom only depend all y promises of God, made in times past to Dauid and to the fathers. This therfore is the sense: I wil giue vnto you that holy one, that is to say, that sauour, which I sometime promised vnto Dauid, and in whome he put all his hope & trust. He applyeth y whole place to y resurrection of Christ, taking his argument of the perpetuity of the couenant, as though he should say. God made an euerlasting couenant with Dauid, and promised that the same should remayne for euer vnto his posteritie. And it is certaine that that couenant is grounded vpon Christ, whome the Scriptures euerywhere call the sonne of Dauid. Ergo, Christ also must be eternall and immortall. For the couenant coulde not be eternall, vnlesse he also were eternall and incorruptible, in whome the same is made, and which is the onely mediator thereof. It followeth therfore that it was necessary, that Christ shoulde rise againe from the deade, and being rayled agayne, shoulde after that suffer no more corruption. Here by the waye it is to be obserued, howe Christ must die but once. And then it followeth, that he must be but once offered for sinne, forasmuch as without shedding of bloude, there is no forgiveness of sinne. See howe copiously Paule handleth this matter. Heb. 9. and. 10. Whereby the sacrifice of the Masse is so ouerthrowne, that it is marueyle howe there shoulde be any among Christians so boyde of shame that can go about to stablish and defende it.

The

The thirde testimonie he alleageth out of the .xvi. Psalme, which we see Peter also bled in his fyrst sermon at Ierusalem, and euen in the same sorte and wise. Also he proueth that that place cannot be vnderstanded of Dauid, but onely of Christ. For thus he reasoneth. Dauid sayeth: Thou shalt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption. But it is manifest that Dauid fynished the course of his lyfe after the maner of other men, and after he had ended his lyfe, fell on sleepe, and mouldred to dust. Therfore Dauid speaketh not of himselfe, but of Christ, which he knewe should be borne of his stocke. For before he suffered corruption, he rose againe the thirde day in his glorious body. So Paule in fewe wordes comprehendeth all the mysteries of Christ, and sheweth that it is he, of whome the Prophetes euerywhere haue spoken. Furthermore, before we make an ende, lette vs obserue the phrase of speech where he sayth that Dauid after he had serued his age or time. This thing teacheth vs both our dutie, and condicion, and state, admonishing vs that mutuall charitie is required of vs, as long as we liue in this worlde, but after we are taken out of this lyfe, that we are quitte of all duties towards all men, and that from thenceforth there is no more required at our handes. Ergo, the deade haue nothing to doe with the liuing, so that it is truly sayde of the saintes in the Prophete: Abraham knoweth vs not, and Israel is ignorant of vs. By this inuocation and intercession to saintes is confuted, whose felicitie cannot be perfyte, if they shoulde be troubled with our miseries and aduersitie. Also the appearing of spirites and soules are reprobued, wherby they that forged and inuented the fyre of Purgatory haue hitherto gotten great gayne. Then also Paule so describeth the death of Dauid, that by the same may be seene the state of euery one of vs in death. For fyrst he sayeth he fell on sleepe by the will of God. Then our death hangeth not vpon the vncertaine hazardes of fortune, or vpon the will of man, but vpon Gods counsaile and determination, who as he hath the heares of our heades numbred: so hath he also the number of our dayes. And this one thing is sufficient to comfort vs against the daungers and terrores of death. That done, he sayth he fell on sleepe. Christ also calleth death sleepe, bicause we being ridde of all the sorowes and griefes of lyfe by death, rest from our labours in hope of the resurrection to come. Thirdly, he sayth, hee was layde vnto his fathers, which kinde of speech in the Scripture is bled very often, and teacheth vs that there are certain places appointed for the soules of the deade, wherof Christ also maketh mention in the Parable of the rich glutton and Lazarus. For the soules of the godly are layde with the blessed, whose resting place the scripture sometime calleth the bosome of Abraham. Contrarywise, the soules of the wicked, and of as many as haue put men in feare in the lande of the liuing, go vnto hell.

Last of all, Dauid sawe corruption. For this is the immutable sentence of God, that we which toke our beginning of dust, shoulde be turned into dust agayne, and so is it requisite for the order of our saluation. For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, & this mortall must put on immortality, bicause flesh and bloud cannot inherite the kingdome of heauen. Therfore we haue a great hope in our corruption, which we knowe is the beginning of our regeneration and resurrection to come. And that this was the onely hope of the Saintes, Iobes wordes in his .xix. Chapter manifestly declare. Let vs therefore comfort our selfe with the same, and not feare death, seeing

The place of
the .xvi. psal.

The state of
the deade.

Esay. 63.

The conside-
ratio of death

Math. 10.

Apoc. 14.

Luc. 16.

Ezech. 32.

Esay. 14.

1. Cor. 15.

ing that we shall be made like vnto Iesus Christ the sonne of God: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glozy for ever. Amen.

The. lxxxiiij. Homelie.

BE it knowne vnto you therefore ye men and brethren, that through this man is preached vnto you the forgiuenesse of sinnes, and that by him all that beleue, are iustified from all things, from which you coulde not be iustified by the lawe of Moses. Beware therefore, least that fall on you, which is spoken of in the Prophetes. Beholde you despyfers, and woonder, and perishe ye. For I doe a worke in your dayes, which you shall not beleue, though a man declare it you.



After the Apostle Paule had diligentely and plainly declared, that Iesus Christ was the very sonne of God, and that sauour that was once promised vnto mankinde, and had also remoued out of the way, all those impedimentes that might hinder the Jewes from the embracing of Christ, nowe at length he concludeth his sermon, which consisteth in two pointes. For fyrst he sheweth what benefytes are giuen vs in Christ, meaning thereby to enflame the mindes of his hearers with the desire of true fayth. Next he layeth the horrible iudgement of God befoze their eyes, in that he vseth to reuenge the contempt of his sonne, and of his worde, vppon them that holde on in their incurablenesse and vnbeliefe.

The know-
ledge of christ
is necessarye
to the attain-
ment of sal-
uation.

Iohn. 17.

Luke. 17.

The fyrst he concludeth with great weyght of wordes, saying: Bee it knowne vnto you therefore, yee men and brethren, that through this Iesus, whom I haue hitherto preached, is the forgiuenesse of sinnes declared vnto you. And it is not without a cause that he thus beginneth, saying: Be it knowne vnto you. For by this meanes he thought to make them the more attent, and diligently to consider that which was to followe. And hereby he teacheth vs that it is necessary and conuenient that as many men as desire to be saued shoulde knowe Christ. For Christ himselfe teacheth vs, that the chiefe poynt of our saluation consisteth in the knowledge of him, where he sayth: This is lyfe euerlasting (ô father) that men should knowe thee, the onely true God, and Iesus Christ whome thou hast sent. Then also where it is the peculiar counsell of God, that the knowledg of Christ through the preaching of the Gospell shoulde be published ouer all the worlde, they that despyse this knowledg of saluation offered vnto vs by God, must nedes be iudged wicked and ingratefull contemners of Gods goodnesse. They are by this place confuted that say, matters of religion belong not vnto them, and are wilfully ignozant, and deceyued in their saluation. Using commonly to abuse Christes wordes, where he sayth: The seruant that knoweth his maisters will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. So that they thinke they shall be excused befoze the iudgement seate of God, so long as they be utterly ignozant in the mysteries of fayth and saluation. But they ought also to thinke that it is vnmæte and not conuenient that they which will be called and taken for the seruauntes of God, shoulde be ignozant of their

their maisters will, and refuse to learne it. It is Gods will that houtholders shoulde declare his commaundements and workes vnto their family: and shall we thinke to be excused, if we wittingly be ignorant of that which God reuealeth vnto vs both by writing and plaine teaching? Why doe we not rather harken what Christ sayth, that they which are borne of God, refuse not to heare the worde of God? And Iames sendeth them which lacke wisdom vnto prayer, to obtayne it of the father of lights. And we want not examples both of Dauid, and other holpe men, who were most desirous to obtayne this heavenly wisdom. See Psal. 25. 119. &c.

But lette vs returne vnto Paule, which comprehendeth in a fewe of wordes, the summe of all Gods benefytes giuen vs in Christ, saying: Through this man is preached vnto you remission of sinnes. For in forgiveness of sinnes, is vnderstanded all those things that appertayne to our saluation. For it is euident that God is offended with vs bicause of sinne, and that for sinnes sake we be excluded from the grace, spirit, and kingdome of God. Wherby againe is gathered, that God must needs be mercitull vnto them, whose sinnes are forgiven and taken away: Ergo, he giueth them his spirite, wherewith being regenerate and made his children, they become inheritors of the kingdome of heauen. Let vs note how Paule in this brieue sentence, doth most fully teach the true knowledge of saluation, which if it be diuided into certaine poyntes and articles, shall most easily be perceived and vnderstanded. The fyrst of them is, that we should vnderstande we be sinners, and stande grievously detbounden vnto God: which hereby appeareth for that the scriptures euerywhere make mention of forgiveness of sinnes. The scriptures likewise euerywhere accuse vs of sinne, and teach vs that we be of nature corrupt. Moses from the mouth of God declareth that the inuentions and deuises of mans heart are naught, euen from his childehode. He setteth the lawe before vs, as it were a glasse, wherein the flesh may behold his corruption, which otherwise blyeth to flatter his selfe. In the booke of Iobe it is written that none borne of a woman is cleane. Dauid confesseth that he was conceyued and borne in sinne. Salomon writeth that the iust man falleth seauen times a day. And in Esay the Prophete, the faythfull confesse that our righteousnesses by reason of the contagiousnesse of sinne and the flesh cleauing vnto vs, are lyke an arayed and fylthy clowte. And Christ admonisheth vs of the same, where he teacheth vs to praye, forgive vs our trespases. For that prayer were superfluous, if we were not loden with grievous sinnes. Nowe it must needs be that this foundation must lye in the knowledge of saluation, bicause man can haue no care thereof, vnlesse he fyrst vnderstand he is vtterly lost and corrupted. But we haue neede also of another thing, that is, to vnderstande howe we be freely forgiven. For where through sinne we haue deserued eternall death, and haue no sparke of goodnesse of our selfe, and all that good which we seeme to doe, is corrupt and vnperfyte: it must needs be that this remission and forgiveness must come of fauour and grace. The Parable in the .xviij. of Mathew teacheth vs the same. And we professe this remission or forgiveness, among the articles of our fayth, where we saye, we beleue the forgiveness of sinnes, and we alleage noz make mention of no satisfaction that dependeth vpon our workes. Thirdly, it becometh that we knowe for whose sake this grace is bestowed on vs. The same is Iesus Christ onely and alone, in whome the

father

Iohn. 8.

Iacob. 1.

Remission of
sinnes is gi-
uen vs in
Christ.1. All men are
sinners.

Gene. 8.

Psal. 51.

Esay. 64.

2. Sinnes are
forgiuen of
grace & fauor13. Grace is
giuen vs in
Christ.

1. Cor. 1.

2. Cor. 5.

Iohn. 1.

iij. Chyist is
taken hold of
by fayth.

Rom. 3.

The lawe can
not iustifye.

father is well pleased, because he hath taken our sinnes vpon him, and hath pouerged them on the aultare of the Crosse, by the merite of his bloude: insomuch that otherwheres he sayeth, he is made to vs of God the father, righteousness, satisfaction and sanctification, yea, and a sacrifice for sinne, that we by his meanes might be made righteous. Iohn the Baptist taught vs the same where he sayeth that Chyist is the lambe of God, that taketh away the sinnes of the worlde. Fourthlye, we must holde fast the meanes whereby Chyist is made oures, which Paule plainly teacheth vs, where he sayeth, forgiveness of sinnes is preached to vs through Chyist. For hereby is gathered that he is receyued by faith, because there is none other meane whereby the worde preached may be taken hold of, yet he expresth the same more plainly in the wordes that followe, saying: By him euery one that beleueth is iustified. Wherevnto all the thinges written of fayth in any place of the scripture, are to be referred, but specially that that Chyist commaunded his Disciples at his last departure from them. For in Luke. xxiiij. he commaundeth repentance and forgiveness of sinnes to be preached in his name. And in another place, wholocuer beleueth, and is baptized, shall bee saued. And all that that Paule prosecuteth at large in 5 Epistles to the Romanes, Galathians, Ephesians, & to diuers other, he comprehendeth in this brieue sentence, wherof if a man lyst to see yet any more compendious and short summe, let him heare this saying of Paule: All haue sinned, and are destitute of the glory of God, but are iustified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chyist Iesu, through faith, by the meanes of his bloude. &c.

And forbecause Paule knewe that the Iewes, with whome he had to doe, did ascribe iustification to the lawe, and to the workes thereof, and that this was the chiefe stumbling blocke of their fayth and saluation: therefore he preuenteth their obiection, saying: By him all that beleene are iustified from all things, from which you coulde not be iustified by the lawe of Moses. In which wordes comparing the lawe with Chyist, he so challengeth the prayse and glory of our iustification to him, that therewithall he testifieth the same can by no meanes be attributed to the lawe. For the lawe sayth he coulde not iustifye vs from all (to save) sinnes, from which yet all they are deliuered, which take holde of Chyist by true fayth. And yet Paule is not to be accused of rashnesse, as though he went about ouer impudently to infringe the authoritie of the lawe. For it shall appeare that he truly so sayde, if we diligently consider the lawe. The lawe may be comprehended in two parts, whereof the one consisteth in vertues or good workes, the other in ceremonies. In the fyrst we include morall and politicall precepts, a short abridgement whereof, we haue in the Decalogue or tables of the commaundements. And if we looke in the same, it shall appeare what God requireth of vs, what we owe vnto him, what to our neighbour, and fynally what to our selues. And our infyrmities and corruption shall also appeare, through the deprauation whereof, we doe not onely disobey the lawe of God, but also are vnable to obey the same. For what man is there in all the worlde, that is able to bring his minde and all the affections of his flesh to the obedience of fayth, as God requireth? For what else is the lawe but a glasse, wherein is betwaped the corruption of our nature, and our sinnes, as well secret as open, brought vnto lyght? And if we come vnto Ceremonies, by the

the which the Jewes in time past measured their righteousnesse, it shall appeare that they also are bayne, and that we be rather accused thereby, than iustified or relieved. For what other thing doth the Circumcision made in our priue member teach vs, but that the beginning of our generation, is corrupt, and that we haue neede of regeneration? What doe the dayly and yerely sacrifices, the sprinklings of bloude, the often washings, the rites of expiation & purifying, what other thing did they teach vs, but that we haue neede of purification & cleansing? But did true purification consist in them? No truly. For the Lorde by his Prophet cryeth out, that their hands which were most occupied in the exercise thereof, were all to embzued with bloud. And in another place: Thinkest thou that I will eate Bulles fleshe, or drinke the bloude of Goates? And Dauid troubled in conscience for his most heynous dede, sayth: Thou desirest no sacrifice, else woulde I giue it thee, but thou delightest not in burnt offerings. &c. **Naue**, hauing a respect to the bloude and merite of the Messias that was promised, he prayeth saying: washe mee throughly from my wickednesse, and cleanse mee from my sinnes. Thou shalt purge me with Isope, and I shall be cleane: washe thou me, and I shall be whiter than snowe. Deliuer mee from bloudguiltynesse, o God, thou that art the God of my heath. &c. Hereof it seemeth Paule toke that saying of his: The bloude of Bullokes and Goates cannot take away sinne. So that Paule in this place sayth most truly, that the lawe cannot iustifye vs. And yet for all this he contemneth not the lawe, or maketh God the authoz of a thing superfluous and vnprofytable. For his honoz remayneth safe vnto him, while here in consisted onely certayne godly exercises of fayth, and while the lawe was (as Paule elsewhere sayth) a tutor and bringer of them which diligently marked the ende thereof vnto Christ.

It is very worthy to be diligently obserued, that Paule sayth we be iustified from all our sinnes through fayth in Jesus Christ, which was impossible by the lawe to be perfourmed. For thus saying, he doth not onely ouerthrowe the affiance which the Jewes had in the workes and ceremonies of the lawe, but also all maner of Popery, and the whole Popedome, which is the greatest enimie that can be founde against the righteousnesse of God, and the saluation which is offered vs in Christ. They marueylously glory in Christ their sauour, but they egregiously euacuate his deserts, while they teache that through his merite originall sinne onely, and the sinnes comitted befoze baptisme, are purged, but all other sinnes through our owne satisfactions. And these satisfactions for the most part consist in the inuentions of mens traditions, as in obseruing of appoynted fastes, in holy dayes, in lyings on the grounde, in cowles, in pilgrimages, in purchasing of pardons, and such lyke tryles. Thus they reprove Paule of lying, which sayth we be deliuered from all our sinnes, through the fayth we haue in Christ. They reprove Christ of lying, which out of the Prophet teache that God the father is in vaine worshipped with the traditions of men, and calleth vs vnprofytable seruantes, although we coulde doe all that is commaunded vs in the lawe. Let vs therfore hymely holde fast this sentence of Paule, which as it attributeth to Christ alone, all y whole meane of our saluation: so is it sufficient to confute all kinde of sects and heresies. And he is no true Christian, that followeth not the same, and stedfastly cleaueth not vnto Christ onely, acknowledging him for his sauour and rede-

Esay. 1.

Psal. 50.

Psal. 51.

Hebr. 10.

The vse of
the lawe.

Galat. 3.

Righteous-
nes of workes
is ouer-
throwne.

Math. 15.

Luke. 17.

1. Cor. 2.
Galat. 6.

The conclus-
sion of Pauls
sermon.

mer, putting his trust in him, and worshipping him in spirite and in truth. For it is impossible that they can please God, which dare despise the sonne of God, and preferre their workes before his merite. Verily, Paule as he preacheth Christ alone in this place, so in other places he confesseth he knoweth nothing but him onely, and thinketh it to be a molte heynous offence, if any body woulde trust or glozy in any other thing.

Furthermore, to make an ende of preaching with the Apostle, it remaineth for vs to consider his conclusion, which conteineth in it a grievous and very horrible commination, the cause whereof was (as may seme) for that he perceyued in the hearers, enident tokens of obstinacie and vnbeliefe. For it is not credible that such a spirite as the Apostle had, coulde without a cause so be moued. For he sayth: Beware that that fall not on you which is spoken of in the Prophetes. &c. Therfore he so threatneth them with punishment, that yet he leaueth a place for hope of pardon, whyle he warneth them to beware least. &c. He bringeth the Oracle of the Prophete out of Abacuc the fyrst Chapter, which by comparison or collation, he applyeth to the matter present. For it is euident this Prophete preached in the reigne of Manasses, what time both ydolatrie and all kinde of vice reygned, vnder that wicked and cruell king. For it is reported that he brought Iurie into error, and the Citizens of Ierusalem, so that they exceeded the Gentyles in naughtynesse, whome God before that had destroyed. Besides this, he greatly contemned the worde of God, and passing all measure hated the truth, against the which he was so inflamed, that he fylled the whole Citie with the bloude of Innocents. And yet they puffed vp in the confydence of Gods couenant, of their forefathers, of the temple, and ceremonies, thought they might without checke thus doe, and those that admonished them to doe otherwise, or threatened them with the iudgement of God, they wickedlye scoffed at. Therfore Abacuc then prophesied the comming of the Chaldeyes, which he sayde shoulde ouerthrowe the Citie and Temple, and shoulde carrie all the people awaye, a thing which they thought was impossible to be done. Herevnto Paule hauing a respect, semeth to say: you knowe what befell vnto your forefathers, when they despised the sayinges of the Prophetes. They sawe the destruction both of the Citie and Temple, neyther coulde that proude name of the people of God, and trust in their ceremonies, deliuer them from the punishment at hande. For although it woulde seme incredible vnto you, if a man woulde saye, that God woulde destroy your nation: yet I say, there are greater and more horrible punishments prepared for you. For the kingdome of God shall be taken from you, and you shall be forsaken, and that saluation that was promised to your forefathers, shall be conueyed vnto the Gentyles.

Unto the
Gospell must
bee ioyned
threates and
declaration of
punishments.

Math. 11.
Luke. 19.

This example of Paule teacheth vs, that the worde of saluation must so be preached, that the iudgement of God must also be layd before the eyes of those that despise it and be vnfaithfull. Therfore they are not to be heard that saye, such preaching is not fyte for the myldenesse of the Gospell, and vnseemely for charitie. For so Christ taught his Apostles, when he sayde it shoulde be easier for those of Sodome and Gomorra in the daye of iudgement, than for those which refused to heare them. Yea, himselfe thundzeth out that horrible (wo) vnto those vnthankfull Cities of Bethsaida, Corozaim, and Capernaum. Doth he not also threaten Ierusalem with besie-

ging,

ging, with the sword, with famine, and with destruction. This the forwardnesse of mannes nature partly requireth, which sometime must be brought vnder by threates, and partly the dutie of a pastor or shephearde, to whom it becommeth like a watchman to giue warning of the sword hanging ouer the peoples heades, that though they be incurable, yet he may deliuer his owne soule, that the bloude of them that perish be not required at his hands. This place also teacheth vs, that there is no sinne more grievous than the contempt of Gods worde, forasmuch as God bleseth to punish no sinne more grievously. For whatsoever sinnes else a man committeth, might after a sort, be ascribed to mans infirmitie, by reason whereof sometime, euen the best men that be, doe fall. But if a man ioyne vnto licentious life, contempt of Gods worde, that is a token of a deuillish and incurable wickednesse. Which was the cause that God alwayes most seuerely reuenged the same. It is knowne what came to passe in the beginning vnto the world for despising Noah the preacher of righteousness. The lyke felt Pharaoh, Saule, Achab, Manasses, and all the people of Israel, being ledde into Assyria. Yet were these things but a pastime and fleabyting to that that afterwarde came to the Jewes for reiecting of Christ, whereof to discourse any further, the time will not suffer vs. In the meane season it is necessarye to tell you this one thing, that in the Jewes is set out to vs, and to all ages, an example, whereby we are taught that no man shall scape unpunished, that is so bolde as to contemne the doctrine of Christ. For he that spared not the naturall braunches, will much lesse spare the impes and graffes set in that stocke, if they be barren. Which thing we see the Churches of Asia and Greece hath many dayes since proued, which being once founded by the Apostles, are now deuided from Christ, and beare the horrible yoke of Mahomets impietie. And woulde to God we sawe not in these dayes the preambles of calamitie to come, in a great many, which to much disdainfully lothe the saluation of the Gospell. Let vs therfore apply to our selues that which Paule sayth in this place, and embracing the doctrine of the Gospell with constant fayth, and thankfull mindes, let vs giue our selues wholly to Jesus Christ our Sauour and redeemer: to whom be prayse, honoz, power, and glozy for ever. Amen.

Mat. 23. 24.

Ezech. 3. 33.

Contempt of
Gods worde
worde is a
most grie-
uous sinne.

Rom. 11.

The.lxxxxiiij.Homelie.

WHEN the Iewes were gone out of the congregation, the Gentyles be-
sought, that they woulde preach the word to them the next Sabbath. When
the Congregation was broken vp, manye of the Iewes and vertuous Prose-
lytes followed Paule and Barnabas, which spake to them, and exhorted them
to continue in the grace of God. And the next Sabbath day came almost the
whole Citie together to heare the worde of God. But when the Iewes sawe
the people, they were full of indignation, and spake agaynst those thinges
which were spoken of Paule, speaking against it, and rayling on it. Then
Paule and Barnabas waxed bolde, and sayde: It was meete that the woorde
of God shoulde first haue bene preached vnto you. But seeing you putte it
from you, and thinke your selues vnworthye of euerlasting lyfe, loe, wee
turne to the Gentyles. For so hath the Lorde commaunded vs. I haue made

thee a light of the Gentyles, that thou be the saluation vnto the ende of the worlde.



That saying of God vttered in this wise by the Prophete Esaye. 55. concerning his worde, is verie notable and comfortable: Like as the rayne and snow commeth downe from heauen, and returneth not thither againe, but watreth the earth, and maketh it fruitefull and greene: So the worde also that commeth out of my mouth, shall not turne agayne voyde vnto mee, but shall accomplish my will, and prosper in the thing whereto I sende it. For although there be many that wickedly repell it, yet hath God alwayes his chosen, in whome it bleseth to bring forth fruite. An euident example whereof we haue at this present. For after that Luke hath reported Pauls sermon, he sheweth also how he had diuers kinde of hearers, whereof some we must imitate, and other some for their wickednesse and boldenesse, we must diligently eschue. And in these diuers hearers, we see the worde also to haue a diuers effect. For to some it is the sauour of lyfe vnto life, and to other some the sauour of death vnto death, as Paule himselfe beareth witnesse, in the last Epistle to the Corinthians. cap. 2.

Reprobates
cannot abide
to heare the
word of god.

Iohn. 8. 10.

Psal. 58.

The elect ac-
knowledge
the worde of
God and re-
ceiue it.

A Proselyte,
was anye
straunger or
forreiner born

Paule beginneth with those which hearde the Gospell preached without any fruite, that is to say, the Jewes, who went out (sayeth he) of the Synagoge, before the congregation brake vp. And this they did for none other cause, but for that they coude not abide to heare the doctrine of Christ, as shall appeare by that that followeth, where it is written howe they made much adoe and struing against the Apostles. For as they that are borne of God, heare the worde of Christ, and knowe by and by the voyce of their shepehearde, so the reprobates and children of this worlde, hate that voice as euill as a Code, and can not be brought willingly to seeke it: and if at any tyme they seeme to heare it otherwise than they looked for, or agaynst their will, then they turne their heades from it, and gette them out of the place where such noyse soundeth. This is an euident token of incurable malice, as we reade Dauid also noted, comparing them to a deafe Adder, which will in wonderfull wise stoppe his eares, bicause he will not heare the voyce of the charmer. And although somtyme they pretend they doe it for modesty: yet it is alway the beginning of a greater impietie. For they which at the fyrst doe but a little lothe the worde of God, and refuse to heare it, if they shall more strongly be vrged there with, then without all reason they rage against it. The Scripture sheweth vs examples in Pharao, Saul, Achab, and many others, which to rehearse woulde be superfluous, forasmuch as we shall streightway heare how stowtly and impiously these men bende themselves against the doctrine of saluation.

Nowe against these men Paule setteth other, which worthily embraced the Apostles doctrine, who Luke sayth, were partly Gentyles, and partly Proselytes. And that these Proselytes were the more apt to receiue Christ, it is euident, for that they had not that proude affiance in their owne worthynesse that hindred the Jewes from the fayth in Christ, as Paule elsewhere teacheth. Although among these were also some Jewes, bicause God did not so vtterly cast of that Nation, but that he reserued certayne rem-

remnantes to be saued. Moreouer, as in the fyrst sort we may see the manners of the reprobate, so in these other sorts the propertie of the elect and children of God, doth notably appeare. Which therefore is the more diligently to be considered, bicause by them we may see what is wanting in our selues, and what we ought to doe. First, they desire the Apostles, that they will the next Sabbath day preach to them againe the same doctrine of saluation. Ergo, they loue the worde of God, and they are not weary of it, bicause by the secret suggestion of the holye ghost, they perceyue the voyce of their heauenly father soundeth in the same. Then when the Church brake vp, they followed the Apostles, and openly acknowledge them for teachers of the truth and their saluation, who yet they knewe were hated of a great number. Then they are not ashamed of the worde of God before men, and they preferre the grace of Christ before the friendshippe of the worlde. These are the principles and rudimentes of true religion, wherein who so well exercise themselves, shall at length bring forth frutes of fayth and saluation not to be repented of. By these may we iudge of the manners of our dayes. For a great many now a dayes despise the worde, and thinke nothing so boyde of true wisdom, as for a man to take aduise of the worde of God concerning his doings and sayings. And though we no way else declare the same, yet we abundantly testifie it, by this one token, in that we be not onely ashamed of the Ministers, but also hate them, abhorre them, flie from them, rayle at them, and euery way iniurie them, as the publike enemies of saluation, and authours of all euill. And yet (on Gods name) we bragge egregiously of our fayth and zeale towarde Christ and his Gospell. But God is not beguiled with vaine wordes, nor delighted with any kinde of religion, but such as hath truth ioyned therewith.

But what saye the Apostles hereunto? They exhort them to continue in the grace of God. For they knewe well that saying of Christ: No manne that layeth his hande to the plough, and looketh backe, is worthy of the kingdom of God. Againe, He that abideth to the ende, shall be safe. And bicause they had good experience of mannes infyrmitie, they knewe that exhortation was needfull for them, for that they had but newly layde the fyrst foundation of their faith and saluation. For many times it cometh to passe, that they which haue begonne well, being epyther afraide of daunger, or caried away and maystred of their affections, fall away againe and swarue. Therefore we must note the example of the Apostles, that we thinke not faithfull admonitions superfluous, without the which, faith and the knowledge of saluation are very seldome retayned.

In the meane season it is very worthy the noting, how they which persevere in the Gospell, are sayde to continue in the grace of God. For by the Gospell is the grace of God offered vs. And Christ sayth that that peace that the Gospell preacheth shall dwell in that house, where the children of peace be, who are such as embrace with true faith the peace and grace of God. Wherebyon we gather againe, that all they which refuse the Gospell, which is the only message of that grace, doe fall from the grace of God. And hereof followeth all kinde of euill, so that they are the most vnworthie people in the worlde, which forsake Christ for the worldes sake. This appeareth by the example of the Jewes, whome the contempt of the Gospell brought to that miserable state that they haue liued in, now more than .xv. hundred years.

that did con-
uert or turne
vnto the
Jewes reli-
gion.
E say. 1.10.
Rom. 10.

In religion,
perseuerance
or holding on
is needfull.

The Gospell
is called the
grace of God.
Math. 10.
Luke. 10.

peares. Therfore let vs thinke that sayde vnto vs, that the Apostles sayde to these men in this place, and let vs embrace the Gospel, and perseuer in the same, that we may likewise enioy the vndoubted grace of God, and his assured helpe in all aduersities.

The contenti-
on of the A-
postles with
the Jewes.

Iohn. 15.

Howbeit, Luke adioyneth to these premises, a grievous contention, fol-
lowing this prosperous successe of the Gospel, wherby we are taught that
the kingdome of Christ in this worlde beginneth neuer so prosperously, but
that some stormes of persecution are ready for them which go about to sette
forth the same. For the saying of Christ sayleth not: If they haue hearde my
voyce, they will heare yours also. And where this worlde commonly hateth
the light of the truth, the more they perceyue the same shineth, the more they
bse to rage and be madde. Therefore no man ought to thinke it a straunge
thing, if the like fall out in our dayes, and that we see troubles aryse among
them, to whom the Gospel at the first is preached. For Paule and Barnabas
the faythfull Apostles of Christ doe here fynde the same to be true. For the
next Sabboth daye, when almost all the Citie was gathered together to
heare the worde of God, the Jewes beholding such a great company rea-
dy to embrace the kingdome of Christ, were fylled with disdain, and first
beganne to speake against Paule, and at length fell to flatte blasphemy and
rayling. And bicause this contention went so farre, that the Apostles were
faine to shake of the dust of their fete against them (a thing which we reade
very seldome done by them) therfore it behoueth vs to expende the circum-
stances of the whole hystorie the more diligently.

i. The occasi-
on of the con-
tention.

First, Luke teacheth vs what the cause was of such a tumult and busi-
nesse. Verily, for that the Jewes sawe the whole Citie almost came togi-
ther to heare the worde of God. Howbeit, it was euident ynough that they
all came not of a godly intent and purpose. For otherwise they woulde ne-
uer haue suffred the Jewes, a people hated of all Nations, to haue intrea-
ted the Apostles so vngently. Wherefore although the desire of truth drew
some thither (as was aforesayde) yet the greater part were moued of vaine
curiositie. Which thing although the Apostles might easily haue supposed,
yet woulde they not let passe so commodious an occasion, but are prest and
ready to teach them. Whereby we learne that they which will fruitefully be
occupied in setting forth the kingdome of God haue neede of a feruent study
and zeale, & that they must let no oportunitie escape, be it in season or out of
season, as Paule elsewhere admonisheth. Christ teacheth vs the same by his
owne ensample, which taketh occasion of euery thing to teach by, and did so
little refuse any one that came vnto him, that he reiected not Nicodemus
comming to him in the night season, nor the woman of Samaria, giuen to dis-
honest gayne and aduantage. Yea, he sayeth, this is his meate, to doe that
wherevnto his father sent him. Hereby is their sloth improued, which being
often called on, will not teache, and haue more regarde of their owne ease,
than of mens saluation.

Phil. 1. 2.
Tim. 4.

Iohn. 4.

ii. The cause
of the conten-
tion.

Then next the cause of the tumult is declared, which was the enuy of
the Jewes, seeing such a great throng of people. They seeme to be mou-
ued partlye with ambition and enuye, while they are afrayde to lose their
primate honoz and glory (which thing Christ obiecteth vnto them, Iohn. 5.)
and partly with a preposterous zeale of the lawe, whereby they were led to
take in euill part, that the vncircumcised Gentyles shoulde be matched with
them

them in saluation, which thing was cause that Paule was much troubled, as we shall see when we come to the places. In the meane while, this place teacheth vs, that all kinde of zeale is not allowable before God, and that they which of zeale and good intent impugne the truth, are not streightway to be pardoned. For Paule otherwhyles attributeth a zeale of God vnto the Jewes, yet he condemneth them, in that they are not zealous for the glory of God, according vnto knowledge. We must therefore beware that no euill affection rule in vs, and that we sinne not of ignorance in Gods will, which must be the onely rule of all our doings.

Thirddye, here is declared what the Jewes the Apostles aduersaries did, which went out before the congregation was broken vp, because they would not heare the word & because they feared they should lose their glory, they speake against them also, and stryue agaynst the truth by arguments. And seeing they cannot that way preuaile, they turne vnto rayling, whereby no doubt they depraue both the doctrine and persons of the Apostles, to make the simple people suspect their doctrine, & enuie them. Such are the craftes of the wicked which euen nowe a dayes also they practise: and they of whome men looke for arguments & scriptures, they thinke by their talke so to preuaile, that they will rayle, and often times open their wicked mouth against the name and word of God. Also this place teacheth vs, wherevnto hatred of the truth bringeth men at the length, when they will continue in the same. For it maketh them blasphemers, open enimies, and impudent raylers, who yet at the beginning seemed good men and tollerable. Let men therfore stoppe at the beginning, and vse to acquaint their eares with the truth, if they meane not to holde on still in stubbornnesse.

But did the Apostles giue place to this stowtnesse of the Jewes? No. But with greater courage and boldenesse of speech resisted them. For so must the Ministers of the worde be furnished, that they must not onely teach the truth, but also be able to withstand the gainesayers. And it is bnniete that they that are the Ministers of Christ shoulde yelde vnto the enterprises of the worlde. Herevnto appertaine the examples of the Prophetes, who we reade were alwayes the constanter, the more bolde they sawe the enimies of Gods worde were. See what is sayde of Micheas in the fyrst booke of the Kinges, and. xxiij. Chapter, and of Ieremie, and others in euery place. And it seemeth that Christ admonished the Apostles of daungers to come, for none other cause so much, as for that they shoulde not be discouraged with the boldenesse of their enimies, nor be offended at them. These things must we remember in these dayes, where Antichristes bande is so whote in assaulting the truth. Let vs thinke that nowe our constancie and stoutenesse is chiefly requisite, faithfully to defende the Churches quarrell being in hazarde.

And the Apostles saying is diligently to be considered, where they with graue and godly weight of wordes, pronounce the horrible sentence of excommunication, against these incurable persons. For what more hope was there to be had of such as they sawe had clymed vp to the toppe of impietie, and fyrst had stopped their eares against the worde of God, and after that had spoken against it, and at length were become blasphemers of it? But chiefly the Apostles charge them with vnthankfulnessse and incredulitie, which was the cause of their punishment, saying: it was meete the worde of

God

Rom. 10.

Num. 15.

iiij. The
sightes and
weapons of
the Jewes.

iiij. The
postles stout-
ly and bolde-
ly resist.

Titus. 1.

v. The
Apos-
tles excom-
municate the
incurable.

Math. 21.

Math. 12.

The place of
Esay. 49. touch-
ing the voca-
tion of the
Gentyles.

Iohn. 1.

Iohn. 17.

God shoulde first be preached vnto you, whome God did boughsafe to adorne with the couenant, the promises, and kindred of his sonne. But you make your selues vnworthy of such grace, while through your incurable malice you despise the saluation offered vnto you. What other thing therfore remaineth, but that we turne vnto the Gentyles, and gather God a Church out from among them, which hitherto haue bene straungers from the couenant and Testaments: For so must that saying of Christ be fulfilled: The kingdome of God shall be taken from you, and giuen vnto a Nation which shall bring forth the fruites thereof. In these things it is very diligently to be considered, howe these vnbelieuing perish through their owne iudgement, vnto whome Christ is preached for a testimonie. Furthermore, how notwithstanding mans incredulitie and vnthankfulnesse, Gods worde is nothing preiudiced or hindered. For God is able of stones to rayse vp children vnto Abraham, which shall embrace Christ with true faith, as we see cometh to passe in the vocation of the Gentyles. For they whose heartes were harder than stones, being mollified with the spirite and worde of God, came with great chearefulnesse vnto the kingdome of Christ.

Howbeit, bicause the Apostles woulde seme to doe nothing rashlye, and of their owne heades, they alleage the Oracle of God out of the xliij. Chapter of Esay, whereby they teache that God long agoe decreed, that the Gentyles also shoulde knowe howe they had saluation in Christ, and that the same shoulde no longer be deferred, seeing the Jewes, vnto whom the same was fyrst to be preached, despised it. Here therfore is the calling of the Gentyles proued, whereof we haue heretofore oftentimes spoken. Moreover, the place of Esay teacheth vs, what is giuen to vs in Christ. First and foremost, a light which worketh in vs the true knowledge of God and saluation, which the industrie of mans reason cannot attaine vnto: for no man hath scene God at any time, the onely begotten sonne, which is in the bosome of the father, he hath declared him. Verily saluation followeth this light. For this is life euermore, that wee knowe God the father, and Iesus Christ whome he hath sent. This is a wonderfull bountie and goodnesse of God, which woulde in so short and brieue a summe set out vnto vs all that belongeth to our saluation. Let vs therfore walke in this light, that darknesse do not overwhelme vs, that we may attaine to saluation in this light, that is in Iesus Christ: to whome be praise, honor, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.lxxxxv.Homelie.

WHEN the Gentyles hearde this, they were gladd, and glorified the worde of the Lorde, and beleued, euen as many as were ordeyned vnto euermore life. And the worde of the Lorde was published throughout all the region. But the Iewes moued the deuout and honest women, and the chiefe of the Citie, and raysed persecution against Paule and Barnabas, and droue them out of their coastes. But they shooke off the dust of their feete against them, and came vnto Iconium. And the Disciples were filled with ioye, and with the holy ghost.

Although



Although God gaue vnto his Sonne
Jesus Christ a kingdome, and all maner of power:
yet the scriptures euerywhere testify, that he should
haue many enemies in the worlde, and Christ him-
selfe oftentimes admonished his Disciples thereof,
least they shoulde hope for a temporall felicitie and
kingdome, and so be offended with the crosse and
aduersitie. This present hystorie sheweth vs an eu-
ident example of such things as Christ sayde shoulde
come to passe. Paule after he had conuerted Cyprus and Pamphilia, came to
Antioch in Pisidia, and there according to his custome, preached Christ in the
Sinagoge of the Jewes. By and by he hath both Jewes and Gentyles to
embrace the doctrine of sayth: yea, the whole Citie almost beganne to listen
and giue eare to the gospel, so that the matter seemed to be brought to passe
euen as he woulde haue it. But sodainly the Jewes stande vp, and openly
speake against the Apostles in their sermons, & refrayne not from rayling.
In the which contention, the constancie and boldenesse of the Apostles is
specially to be noted, whereby they did not only resist their wicked enemies,
but also pronounced the horrible iudgement of God against them, declaring
howe God woulde forsake them, and transference his kingdome vnto the
Gentyles, yet coulde not this contention be so appeased, but more grievous
matters yet ensued, of the which Luke intreateth in this place. For he tea-
cheth vs howe the doctrine of the Gospel was most faithfully published e-
uen in the middle of the enemies. After this, he sheweth a newe persecuti-
on, by meanes whereof the Apostles were driuen out of Pisidia, and came
to Lycaonia. The ende of this Tragedie at length is declared to haue bene
prosperous and ioyfull to the godly, but very horrible and miserable for the
ungodly.

To the first part of this place appertaineth this saying: when the Gen-
tyles hearde this, they were glad, and glorified the worde of the Lorde, and be-
leeued, euen as many as were ordeyned vnto eternall life. And the worde of the
Lorde was published throughout all the Region. The Gentyles which hearde
Pauls wordes, reioyced not bicause the Jewes were forsaken (for that had
bene vsitting both for their faith and Christian charitie) but for that they
hearde that saluation belonged to them also, and that Christ was the sa-
uiour, not onely of the Jewes, but also of the Gentyles, according to the
Oracles of the Prophetes. Therefore with thankfull mindes they em-
brace the worde of God, and worthily commend it. And this saluation is
not containied within the walles of the Citie onely, but is caried and spred
abrode by preaching of the worde, ouer all the Countrey of Pisidia. There
are in these things certaine poyntes worthy of diligent consideration, of all
which we will intreate orderly.

And first it is to be considered, what these men were, of whome these
things are reported, verdy such as were ordeyned vnto eternall life. And
Luke so describeth them, that it is manifest what the cause is, that men be-
leue the Gospel, when the same is impugned of many and cruell enemies.
Surely it is the free election of God, who ordeyneth those vnto lyfe, whom
it pleaseh him, and likewise leaueth them in destruction, and eternall dam-

Gggg. i.

nation,

1. The doc-
trine of the
Gospel is
set forth in
the midst of
troubles.

They that
are ordeyned
vnto life eter-
nall beleeue.

1. Cor. 2.

Phil. 2.

Iohn. 3. 6.

Math. 16.

Ephes. 1.

1. Pet. 1.

Rom. 8.

Iohn. 10.

Rom. 11.

nation, whome it seemeth him good. For if we consider man, as he is of nature, we shall see it is not in his will or power to beleue the Gospell, and to take holde of Christ. For the naturall man perceyueh not the things belonging vnto the spirite of God. And wee bee not able of our selues so much as to thinke a good thought. Our sauour Christ teacheth vs þy very same, where he sayth: it is needefull that we be borne againe from aboue, and that none cometh vnto him, but whome his father draweth. He sayde likewise vnto Peter making confession of his faith: Happy or blessed art thou Simon the sonne of Ionas. For flesh and bloude hath not opened that vnto thee, but my father which is in heauen. Of the which sayings we may easily gather, that faith belongeth to them onely, whome God hath chosen and predestinate vnto life euerlasting. And it is plaine, that this election was made from euerlasting, and before the beginning of the worlde, and that in Christ who was ordeyned to be our sauour and Redemer before this world was made. Therefore our election is free and of Gods mercie. Furthermore, those whome he chose in Christ, the same when he seeth good, he calleth by preaching of the Gospell, and draweth effectuously by his spirite, that being grafted in Christ through faith, they may be iustified by his merite, and made partakers with him of the heavenly gloze, according to that saying of Paule: Those which he knewe before, he also ordeyned before, that they shoulde bee like fashioned vnto the shape of his sonne. Moreouer, whome he appointed before, them also he called. And whome he hath called, them also he iustified, and whome he iustified, them he also glorified. And as many as be of this number, they easily heare the voyce of Christ, and perceyue that God calleth them, because they haue the seede of God in them, which lying hidden before, is by the worde of God quickened, and brought to maturitie and perfyte ripenesse. Hereof it proceedeth that Christ sayth, they that are borne of God, and are the sheepe of his flocke, heare his voyce, and are delighted therewith, yea, and those he acknowledgeth for his sheepe, of whome hitherto he was unknowe, and which were afterwarde to be called and drawne, saying: I haue other sheepe also which are not of this folde. Them also must I bring in, and they shall heare my voyce, and there shall bee one folde and one shephearde. Of which sort Luke sheweth that these Antiochians were. And the treatie hereof ought to seme to no man superfluous, forasmuch as there is nothing belonging to our saluation more pleasaunt or profytable to be considered than this. For herein are opened the fountaines of our saluation, and we are taught that the same dependeth vpon the mere grace of God, and therefore the arrogant and Pharisaicall glorying in mannes wylde and merite, is hereby quite ouerthrowne and buried. This also proueth the certaintie of our saluation, and marueylously fortifyeth our faith, if it shoulde stagger through temptations. For God cannot repent him of his electing and calling vs. And whereas we be elected or chosen in Christ, which is that impregnable rocke, against which the gates of hell are not able to preuaile, and which will not suffer his sheepe to be taken out of his handes. It is impossible that they should fall from their saluation, which seele themselves to be grafted in him. Wherevnto this place also is to be referred, where it is sayde: As many beleued, as were ordeyned vnto life euerlasting. For although the Jewes raged neuer so much, they coulde not hinder the saluation or faith of one of the elected. And as many as shall in this wyse consider

consider Gods predestination and election, shall perceyue their fayth to be marueylously increased. And if any will waide yet deeper in Gods secrets & mysteries, and will presume to call his eternall counsailes to the count of mans reason, they shall at length go so farre, that eyther they shall scoffingly deride the iudgements of God, or else attribute that vnto man, which it becommeth vs to seeke only in the grace and fauour of God, and shall spoile Christ of his glory, who is the foundation of our saluation. See Rom. 9.11.

But to returne to these electes, let vs consider the effect of Gods word, that appeared and shewed it selfe in them, by the which may easily be gathered what their dutie is to whom God electeth. This is a marueylous effect of Gods worde, that euen in the greatest feare of all daungers, the hearts of those that beleeued, are recreated with ioye, considering howe God the father is well pleased with them. Wherevnto Christ had a respect, when he bade vs reioyce in troubles. Then after that, it is sayde, they glorified the worde of God, which is a token of thankfulness, which they cannot choose but render vnto God, which haue any thing tasted of the grace of God. They vse to glorifye the worde of God, which embrace it with fayth, and submit themselfe vnto it, subduing all their reason and vnderstanding vnto it, which is not the last nor least ende of preaching the Gospell, as we haue in other places declared. These thinges teache vs, what they haue to doe, that will be counted of the number of the elect, and they also are here confuted, which saye the exercises of Christian religion and good woorkes, are by this doctrine of free election and predestination put away and destroyed. For where (as it was befoze declared) vocation or calling followeth election, and iustification by fayth followeth calling or vocation, it cannot be that he which vnderstandeth he is elected, can cast from him the woorkes of a Christian man. For he knoweth that we are elected in Christ to that end, that after we haue here liued an innocent and irreprehensible life, we shall liue with Christ for euer in heauen. Wherefoze according to the Apostles commaundement he labourerth by continuall traueyle in innocencie and godlynesse, to ratifye and confyrme his election and calling.

Thirde, it is to be obserued howe Luke sayth the worde of God was published throughout all the Countrey. For hereby it appeareth howe little the wicked are able to preuaile against Christ with all their attempts. For the spirite of God bloweth where it listeth, and is not moued eyther with the authoritie or power of man. Therfoze the same cometh here to passe, that we sawe came to passe befoze at Ierusalem, in the persecution of Steuen. And this is the propertie of the worde of God, the more to shewe his power and force, the more it is withstanded, delighting (as it were) to wrastle with the aduersaries. And there is no cause for any man to aske why we see not Christes kingdome haue as good successe in these dayes. For by our sloth and negligence, the boundes thereof are drawne in, and narrowed, and we see that saying of Christ is true in all states of men, where he testifieth that in the later times, faith shall be very rare & scant vpon the earth.

Furthermoze, after these ioyfull successes of the Apostles, and victories gotten against these wicked enimies, a newe businesse aryseth, namely, a manifest persecution, whereof the same Jewes were the authors, because they coulde preuaile nothing at the first, and because they sawe the doctrine of Christ stronger than to be ouerturned with the craft of Sophisters, or

The effect of
Gods worde
in the elect,
and their du-
ties.

Math. 5.

Eph. 4.

2. Pet. 1.

The word of
God is set
forth through
the enterpri-
ses of the ad-
uersaries.

Luke. 18.

2. Persecutio
raised by the
Jewes.

with slaunders and reproches. And the Jewes many times in this booke are reported to haue bene the beginners of persecution, and Paule writing of them in the fyrst Epistle to the Thessalonians seconde Chapter, sayth: For as they killed the Lorde Iesus, and their owne Prophets, euen so they persecute vs, and God they please not, and are contrary to all men, and hinder vs that we shoulde not speake vnto the Gentyles, that they might bee sau'd to fulfill their sinnes alwaye. &c. Which things are therfore to be obserued, that we might acknowledge the iust iudgement of God vpon them, and how those horrible and straunge calamities fell vpon them worthily, which our Sauour Christ threatened vnto them, and are written in hystories. For God purposed by the example of them to teache vs, what remayneth for all the despisers and enemies of his sonne. And it is very worthy the consideration, to see by what subtile meanes they procured this persecution, and what effect it had.

Women rap-
sed against
the Apostles.

First their subtiltie appeareth in those whom they went about to make on their sides, against the Apostles. And these were fyrst certaine women commended for their honestie and godlynesse. And it was not without a cause that they thought their helpe meete for this purpose. For this sere of women as they are naturally inclined and giuen to superstition, so are they very apt to deceyue, specially when the matter hath a pretence of religion, and colour of any custome receyued. Then by them is there an entry made vnto the husbandes, with whome by flattery and enticements, they are able to doe very much, but specially if they be commended for their honestie and godlynesse. Heua the fyrst mother of vs all maye serue for example, whom Satan in the beginning thought a meete instrument to abuse, whereby to deceiue mankind. And bicause his fyrst enterpryse succeeded so well, he thought afterwarde to vse the same instrument still. Therefore through women he deceyued Salomon, which was the fyrst sower of Idolatrie among the Israelytes, which Idolatrie afterwarde coulde not be rooted out, with all that the kings and Prophetes coulde doe. And by the authoritie of Iesabel, he brought in the worshipping of Baal. I let passe infynite other examples which might be alleaged. Paule had so well marked this thing, that he wrote howe this was commonly the propertie of deceyvers, to beguyle women, specially such whose consciences they see are clogged with sinne. And this is so common a thing in our daies, that he is blinder than a Mole or Want, that seeth it not. Yet let no man thinke I speake this in reproch of womankind. But let it serue rather to teach women to beware, that they suffer not themselves to be beguyled, vnder so false a visor and pretence of religion.

2. Tim. 3.

Magistrates
offended with
the Apostles.

And where women alone perhappes might be made light account of, they moue the Magistrates also and the chiefe of the Citie against them, in exasperating of whome, they doubtlesse vsed the helpe of the women. They make the Magistrates offended with them, as with disturbers and breakers of publike peace, which hath in all ages bene the onely argument wherewith the wicked haue most impugned the doctrine of truth, as the hystories of the Prophetes teache vs, all which it is plaine were for the most part accused with Christ of sedition. And at this daye there is nothing more ryfe and common. But let vs marke howe there is nothing in all Antioch of any power, eyther by reason of holynesse, or publike authoritie, but it is bent

bent and armed against the Apostles, hauing none but the Commons on-lye to take their part. They that measure religion according to the authori-ty of men, are hereby reprobued. For if this opinion may preuaile, the A-postles cause must be in daunger of quailing. Therefore Christ teacheth vs a farre other maner of lesson, who testifieth that the mysteries of the king-dome of heauen are hidden from the wise, and reuealed vnto little ones. Referre also to this place the things spoken 1. Cor. 1. about the ende, to this purpose.

Nowe the effect of the persecution was, that the Apostles were ex-pelled the borders of Pisidia, by publike authoritie. Yet was not the gospell bi-terly banished and put to flight, forasmuch as there is mention made here-after of Disciples, which were endued with all kinde of giftes of the holye ghost. It was a common thing in all ages, that alwayes the true worship-pers of God were put in explement, as publike plagues. Where in the meane season the wicked might without checke walke by and done in the middle of the streetes, for whose sake the wrath of God bleth to be kindled. And after banishment commonly followeth losse of goodes, and miserable pouertie. God suffreth these things to light vpon his elect for many causes. For this waye he declareth his power, which then most appeareth, when he preserueth his Church in the middle of the waues of persecution. Then also he trieth the faith of those that be his, as gold is tried in the fyre, & mortifieth the vnworthy reliques of y flesh, that we be not therby deceyued, & swarue aside. Moreouer, he maketh vs like vnto his sonne, y they which suffer with him, may also reigne with him. Furthermore, he bleth this waye to make those that be his, weary of the worlde, which worlde otherwise our fleshe bleth to esteeme, and make to much of. Therefore these things ought to of-fende no man, but let vs rather often thinke on the promises of Christ, such as are these: There is none that hath forsaken house, or brethren, or sistren, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or landes for my sake, but hee shall re-ceyue an hundreth folde nowe in this life, with persecutions, and in the worlde to come lyfe euerlasting. Againe: ye are they which haue bidden with mee in my temptations: and I appoynt vnto you a kingdome, as my father hath ap-poynted to me, that you may eate and drinke at my table in my kingdome. &c. And againe: where I am, there shall my minister also bee. They which dili-gently consider these things, can haue nothing come vnto them so grieuous or intollerable, but they knowe the ende thereof shall be ioyfull. In the meane season, let vs earnestly shew our dutie of charitie vnto those that are banished for Chrestes sake, and which come vnto vs, being driuen out of their owne Countrie, and let vs not suffer them by our meanes wrongfull-lye to be suspected, seeing they suffer for the same cause that Chrestes Apo-stles did. Let vs remember that saying of Christ: I was harbourlesse, and you tooke me in. &c.

Nowe let vs see the ende of this Tragedie, which Luke writeth was very horrible and miserable to the obstinate Jewes, but very ioyfull to the godly & those that belaeued. For the Apostles seeing y malice of the Jewes to be inuincible, shooke of the dust of their fete against them, and departed vnto Iconium, a Citie of Lycaonia, which thing they did according to Chri-stes commaundement, who sayde on this wise to his Disciples: whosoever will not receyue you, when you go out of the Citie, shake of the verie dust from

Math. 23.

Banishment
the effect of
persecution.

2. Tim. 2.

Marc. 10.

Luke. 22.

Iohn. 12. 14.
and. 17.

Math. 25.

3. The end of
the persecu-
tion.The shaking
off of dust.

Luke. 9.

from your secte, for a testimonie against them. And againe, in the same Evangelist he sayth cap. 10. Into whatsoeuer Citie you enter, and they receyue you not, go your wayes out into the streetes of the same and saye: euen the very dust of your Citie which cleaueth on vs, wee wye of against you. Notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdome of God was come nigh vpon you. Therefore this shaking off of dust was a solemne and publike signe of execration, whereby was signified that all the wicked contemners of the Gospell, shoulde be scattered abroad like dust, and that such horrible curse of God hong ouer them, that they which woulde be saued, shoulde not so much as be partakers of the dust belonging vnto them. And these thinges God woulde haue done for a testimonie or witness against them, to take awaye from them all maner of excuse. For the wicked commonly pretende ignorance when they are binged with Gods iudgementes. And to the ende they shoulde not so doe, but be choked with the testimonie of their owne conscience, the Apostles might not depart thence without publike protestation, and denunciation of punishment which shoulde come vpon them, as if they shoulde saye: we be fræ from your bloude. For we preached vnto you the kingdome of God according to our dutie, which bicause you reiect, through your incurable impietie, we leaue you to the iust iudgement of God, which shall be so grieuous, that it is not lawfull for vs to haue so much as y dust of your streetes to cleaue vnto vs. For as Christ beareth witness, at the later day Sodome shall haue an easier iudgement than you. And if the dust which cleaueth to the fete of Christs Ministers, be sufficient to conuince and reprove the contemners of the Gospell, what then shall we iudge, I praye you, of the sermons, deuises, writings, and bloude that they haue shedde for the testimonie of Iesus Christ. Let vs compare these things with our times, that we may perceyue howe inexcusablye they sinne, which in these dayes with so great impietie refuse the preaching of the kingdome of God. Let vs therefore eschewe so heynous an offence, and abhorre the familiaritie of them, whome we know to be polluted herewith. For although such threates as these seme but ridiculous to these kinde of men, they shall yet fynde at the ende that they were to be belæued.

The ende of
persecution
is ioyfull vnto
to the fayth-
full.

Iohn. 16.

But the ende of this hystory was not so grieuous to the wicked, but it was as chearefull for the godly. For of these Luke sayeth: The Disciples were filled with ioye, and the holy ghost. We hearde before how they reioyced. That ioye coulde neyther be disturbed by this persecution, ne yet be cleane taken away, but remayned vnto them whole and sounde. Therefore that saying of Christ is truely fulfilled: your heart shall reioyce, and no man shall take your reioycing from you. The authoz of this ioy is the holy ghost, which emboldened them and comforted them, that they shoulde not faynt vnder the crosse, and also instructed them with diuers gifts, wherewith the Primitiue Church (as we haue often sayde) did flourish. Here appeareth an inuincible power of the holy ghost, which is able to defende the faythfull of Christ against all the power of the worlde. Lette the same comfort vs in these dayes in our daungers, and lette vs not suffer our selues to be overcome with the feares of this worlde, we, I saye, which be elected through grace before this worlde was made, and are now called by the preaching of the Gospell, that we maye be iustified by fayth, and glorified in Iesus Christ: to whome be praise, honoz, power, and glozy, for euer. Amen.

The

The.xiiij. chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The.lxxxxvj.Homelie.

AND it came to passe in Iconium, that they went both together into the Synagoge of the Iewes, and so spake that a great multitude of the Iewes, and also of the Greekes beleued. But the vnbeleeuing Iewes stirred vp, and vnquieted the mindes of the Gentyles against the brethren. Long time abode they there, and quitte themselues boldlye with the helpe of the Lorde, which gaue testimonie vnto the worde of his grace, and graunted signes and woonders to be done by their handes. But the multitude of the Citie was diuided, and part held with the Iewes, and part with the Apostles. When there was an assault made both of the Iewes and of the Gentiles, with their Rulers, to doe them violence, and to stone them, they were ware of it, and fledde vnto Lystra and Derba, Cities of Lycaonia, and vnto the Region that lyeth rounde about, and there preached the Gospell.



We hearde in the Chapter before going howe Paule and Barnabas being sent forth by the commaundement of the holy ghost, beganne to preach the Gospell among the Gentyles, who had so good successe in their businesse, that within short space of time, they did lighten the Isle of Cyprus, Pamphilia, and Pisidia, with the doctrine and fayth of Christ. Howbeit, the waywardnesse of the Iewes which were at Antioch seemed somewhat to hinder the course of the Gospell: whereby it came to passe,

that being shamefully banished the coastes of Pisidia, they were constrained to shake of the dust of their fete against them, a thing which we reade they scarce did in any place before. Howbeit, because no man shoulde thinke the Apostles were afrayde that Christes kingdome was any thing hurt or hindered thereby, Luke goeth forward with his hystorie begonne, and declareth what they did after they were expelled the coastes of Pisidia. And this place conteyneth a declaration of the thinges done at Iconium, which we shall note when we haue tolde of Iconium such things as make for the vnderstanding of this hystorie.

Iconium in Lycaonia, into the which there lyeth an open passage out of Pisidia, to them that traueyle Eastwarde, hath bene a very famous Citie,

Iconium.

tie, so called in Greeke, by reason of an Idoll or Image, which the Poetes feigne was made by Prometheus and Minerva, at the commaundement of Iupiter, after the floude of Deucalion, and quickened by winde blowne into it. Wherefore as by reason of their riches, they lived riotously: so because of the auncient superstition of this Image, the Citizens were giuen altogether to Idolatrie, even like the people of our dayes, which vse to glory in the Images painted by S. Luke, or in other as notable lyes as that is. Here appeareth the marueylous goodnesse of God, who woulde vouchsafe to visite this Citie with the light of his worde, and so mercifully offer saluation to them in his sonne, which by reason of their prophane worshipping of Images, deserued destruction. And for none other cause doth Paule elsewhere so diligently describe what condicion the Gentyles stode in, before they knewe Christ, than for that it might thereby appeare that all our saluation consisted in the mere fauour of God, and that nothing ought to be attributed to mannes merites. Whosoever shall well examine themselves and consider what they were before they knewe Christ, shall confesse the same. But these thinges being thus premised, let vs consider the hystorie present, where Luke sheweth what the Apostles did at Iconium, what successe they had, and howe after they had faithfully traueyled in the businesse of the Lorde, newe persecution arose against them.

1. The Apostles teach in the Synagoge.

The constancie and faith of the Apostles.

Ezech. 3.

First, they go into the Jewes Synagoge, and there teach. But what they taught, Luke declareth not, because before he had reported in his hystorie certaine whole sermons of theirs, of the which may easily be gathered, what they euerywhere preached. For they which had receyued of Christ an expresse and euident commaundement, and which did all things by the guiding of Christes spirite, which is the spirite of truth, and therefore in all poyntes agreeth with it selfe, coulde not teach diuers things, and repugnant in themselves. Therefore what should it neede so often to repeate one thing? But this is worthy both to be obserued and marueyled at, that they will againe go into the Jewes Synagoge, and teach among them, whom they had founde the greatest enemies of the Gospell, and whose companie not long before was to their great hindraunce and displeasure at Antioch. This is a notable argument of constancie and trust, which they did vse in the office committed vnto them. For as we sawe in the ende of the Chapter before, the Magistrates of Antioch so tooke against them, by reason of the instigation of the Jewes, that they were in danger of their lyfe, and were banished the coastes of Pisidia, in shamefull wise. Besides, there were diuers thinges which might haue made them despaire of the Jewes saluation. For they were not ignorant of the prophecies and threatens of Christ, which with one consent declared howe the kingdome of God shoulde be carryed to the Gentyles: and they might manie wayes perceiue that the tyme of this forsaking was at hande. And what, I praye you, might they hope for at their handes, whome they sawe embzued with the bloude of the sonne of God, and who did deadly hate the truth? Yet go they on constantly executing the charge committed to them of the holy ghost, least any shoulde perish through their sloth. And no doubt but that saying rang in their eares, which was sayde vnto Ezechiel: If I saye vnto the wicked and vngodly man, without doubt thou shalt die, and thou giuest him not warning, that he maye turne from his euill waye and so liue: then shall the same vngodly man dye in his

his owne vnrighteousnesse, but his bloude will I require at thy hande.&c. But let all men to whom God hath committed charge ouer any persons, thinke that sayde vnto them, that was sayde to the Prophete, and which we see the Apostles obserued. In which place Magistrates, Parents, and other such like are to be accounted. All which must well beware, that they let not the malice of menne ouercome them. For, although they whome they haue the charge of, be incurable, yet shall they receyue great profyte by their diligent study and endeouour, if they doe deliuer but their owne soules.

Moreouer, this is a notable example of Christian charitie, that the Apostles so painefully and with such perill traueyle to bring a most enuious nation, and like thortlye to perishe, by reason of their incurable wickednesse vnto saluation. For where charitie alway hopeth well, they also hoped that some remnants might be saued, as we see cometh to passe oftentimes in shipwrack. Hereof cometh it, that Paule so incessantly prayeth for them, and wisheth to be accursed, so that they might be saued. The like affection we see in Christ, who was moued with all maner of pittie, when he saue them miserably dispersed like sheepe that had no shephearde. He wept also when he behelde that bloudie Ierusalem, because he saue they obstinately ranne into their owne destruction, and woulde not knowe the daye of their visitation. By these examples are those barbarous and grosse people reprovied, who are touched so little with the calamitie of others, or else so impotently ledde with the desire of priuate renenge, that for some fewes sake who haue iniuried them, they will beare hatred to the whole Nation: to say nothing of such, who when they can alleage no cause of their hatred, are yet of a certaine secrete corruption of nature, driuen headlong with hatred, & reioyce at the miserie of others. But how can they be the children of God, which so farre differ from the nature and propertie of God? For he desireth that men shoulde be saued, and come to the knowledge of truth. He bleseth to spare whole Cities for a fewes sake that be good, which Cities they desire to be destroyed, for a fewes sake that be euill. But the chiefe cause of this euill is, for that we consider not as meete is, the goodnesse of God towards those that deserue a thousande deathes, nor his promises, which rewardeth them that earnestly doe their office and dutie.

Nowe let vs see what the Apostles gotte by this feruent proceeding of theirs, that hereby they also may be refused which leaue of, despayring they shall doe any good before they take the matter in hand. They so spake (sayth he) that a great multitude both of the Iewes and Greekes beleued. Therefore the worde of God is neuer preached without fruite: and euerywhere there are some founde, which receyue it as they ought to doe, so that it bringeth forth fruite, as we haue oftentimes declared. And God sayleth not for his part those that faithfully labour in his name. For as Peter letting slippe his nettes at the Lordes bidding, caught a great hale of fische, hauing before taken nothing as long as he followed his owne heade, so as manye as order their matters in the name of God, and as he appoynteth them, fynde greater commoditie of their labour than they looked for. Therefore it must be attributed to our sloth and falschode, that so little good is done in these dayes. For howe shoulde the Lorde with his helpe prosper them, who hauing no regarde of his glozy, seeke onely their owne commoditie, and neuer will aduenture to doe any thing for Gods name sake, and for the salua-

The love of
the Apostles
toward their
enimies.

Rom.10.9.

Luke.19.

1.Tim.2.

2. The effect
of the Apo-
stles doctrine

tion of all men. Also it appeareth in this place, as we haue often sayde, that the enterprises of Chyistes enimies are in vaine, and that his kingdome by persecutions, is rather furthred than hindred. The continuall course of the Actes of the Apostles declareth the same, if we well regard it. Let vs in these things acknowledge the wisdom of God, and not despaire to some of Chyistes kingdome, seeing he can so prosperously defeate the deuises of his enimies.

3. The persecutio
against
the Apostles.

i. The
Jewes are
authors of
the persecu-
tion.

Furthermore, after this good successe, Chyistes kingdome is afresh persecuted, so that a manne may see it is most true that Chyist foretewed, concerning the wicked enterprises of the worlde, and the traueyles and daungers of his Ministers. It shall profyte our knowledge, if we deeply weigh and consider all the circumstaunces of this newe tragedie. First, he nameth the beginners of the persecution, even the Jewes, who not content with their owne incredulitie, incensed the mindes of the Gentyles against their brethren, who had professed Chyist: which coulde not be without slaundering of them. And no doubt but they called them the authours and sowers of sedition and trouble, forasmuch as we see the faythfull seruants of Chyist, haue in all ages bene charged with like crimes. It is verily an horrible thing, that the Jewes should conceyue such a cankered hate against the truth, and they whome God in time past bled to call his children and Priestly kingdome, to be made the vngodly besselles and instrumentes of wrath. Lette no man therefore put his confydence in the worthynesse of forefathers, or in any such prerogatiues, but followe humilitie, and reuerence God, if they meane not to be throwne downe of God, as they were, let vs marke in this place who are the authours of tumultes and sedition. Not they that beleue the Gospell, but they which refuse to beleue it. For the beleuing labour to be at peace with all men, as much as in them lyeth. The other because they can not abide the light, vse to bring the Ministers of the truth in suspition with the people, through false accusations, and by sedition, to oppresse the truth. But in the meane season they goe about with marueylous conueyance to put the godly in the fault, wherof we haue examples in Achab the king, and in the Jewes accusing Chyist before Pylate. It behoueth vs to marke these things, that we now a dayes to quickly beleue not those which say, that common weales and publike peace is disturbed by preaching of the Gospell. Secondly, it is declared what manner of men the Apostles shewed themselves to be in this tumult. They go on, and yelde not at the fyrst to the wicked, but abiding a long space at Iconium, doe the businesse of the Lorde with great trust and boldenesse. And God assisteth them with his fauour, and by myracles and signes giueth testimony vnto the worde of grace, that is to saye, to the Gospell, whereby the grace of God in Chyist is preached vnto vs. The example of the Apostles teacheth vs, that they which will be Ministers of Chyist must not yelde ouer sone to the attemptes of the wicked, although they see great trouble like to follow therof. For we must admit nothing against the glory of God, the rather to agree with y world, which Chyist calleth naughty, adulterous, and vntowarde, and therefore teacheth it to be vnmete that the true seruants of God, shoulde haue so much regard thereof. In the meane season this place sheweth vs what the vse of myracles is. They be done by the handes of the Ministers, God being the authoz of them, not for that men

ii. The Apo-
stles do bold-
lye resist the
seditions.

Marc. 8.

shoulde

shoulde attribute vnto the Ministers more than vnto men, but that they shoulde be as seales for them that beleue not, and which haue not bene blesed to the worde of God. Christ our Lorde confesseth the same of his myracles. And he teacheth vs that those which the Apostles shoulde doe, shoulde serue for none other vse. Here therefore are confuted two errors reigning euerywhere in our dayes. The fyrst is the error of them, which requyre myracles of vs, whereof there is no great neede among Christian people, whose faith must stande vpon the worde of God, and which confesse that the Apostles doctrine hath long since bene sufficientlye proued by myracles. The other is of the Papistes, which alleage a number of most piewish myracles against the manifest truth, for their inuocation of Saints, transubstantiation, Purgatorie, & other such kinde of trifles. Howbeit, it behoued they shoulde fyrst haue proued their opinions by the worde of God, which thing seeing they cannot doe, they ought to be taken for false and lying signes, that are brought forth for the proue of them, such as Christ long agoe prophesied Antichrist shoulde worke in the later dayes. Thirdly, it is declared howe farre this persecution went: The whole multitude of the Citie was deuided (sayth he) and part helde with the Iewes, and part with the Apostles. This was not therefore a little trouble among a fewe of persons, but all the whole Citie was deuided, and take part one against another, which thing is the greatest plague that can happen in a Citie. Howbeit, this is it that Christ sayde shoulde come to passe: I came not to sende peace, but a sworde. For I came to set a man against his father, and the daughter against hir mother, and the daughter in lawe against hir mother in lawe, and a mannes foes shall be they that are of his owne housholde. Here yet must we remember what was sayde before of the vnbeleuers, which were the procurers of this persecution. For Christ is not properly and truely anye authour of diuision, forasmuch as in all places he commendeth peace vnto vs, and commaundeth vs to loue our enemies. But such is the malice of the wicked, that the more they are bzged with the wholesome doctrine of Christ, the more they raue, and at length professe open enmitie, which thing cannot be ended without sedition. For as the vngodly will holde fast their vngodlynesse with tooth & nayle, so the godly must not forsake their standing wherein they are placed of God, least they seme to make more of the friendshippe of the worlde, than of the glorie of Christ, and the saluation of mennes soules: For the which cause the Apostles shewe not themselves to be neutrales in this contention, although they were straungers, whome Cicero forbiddeth to be curious in other mens common weales. For where some are sayde to take part with them, it easily appeareth that they also toke a part. Therefore they are little like vnto the Apostles, which as soone as controuersies fall out in matters of religion, thinke it an high poynt of wisdom to stande as neutrales and indifferentes. Solon sayth he was no good Citizen, which in a sedition woulde be of no syde. And shall we call them Christians, who when Christes glory is assaulted, will sit like ydle gazers, without all daunger, and looke on? Surely these men are those warme-linges neyther colde nor hote, which Christ threateneth he will spewe out. Fourthly, the same ende commeth of this persecution, which was before of that at Antioch. For the enemies of Christ with the rulers and Magistrates rose vpp in such rage, that the Apostles were in daunger to haue bene

H h h. ij.

stoned.

Iohn. 5. 10.

Marc. 16.

Math. 24.

2. Thel. 2.

14. All the citie is at diuision.

Math. 10.

Apoc. 3.

114. The Apostles fye from Iconiu, and preach at other places.

stoned. Wherefore they following the counsaile and example of Christ, fled from thence, reseruing themselves for a more seasonable time. And yet are they not to be blamed bicause they fled in a sedition, rayled by their occasion. For what shoulde they else doe, seeing the matter tended to open violence? Let vs diligently marke what they did after they were escaped. For they gaue not themselves to fylthie ydlenesse, but comining to Lystra and Derba, spred the doctrine of the Gospell ouer all Lycaonia. As therefore it is lawfull to flie, when neyther the glory of Christ, nor the saluation of the Church is in hazarde, least by putting our selues in daunger rashlye, we seeme to tempt Christ: so must we take heede, that we followe not the counsaile of rascall feare, and forsake the office that God hath called vs to. Let vs therefore haue alwayes before our eyes the glory of God, as the marke of all our deuises. For so shall it come to passe, that hauing passed all daungers, we shall keepe both our fayth and soules in Iesus Christ our Sauour: to whome be all prayse, honoz, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.lxxxxvij.Homelie.

AND there sate a certaine man at Lystra, weake in his feete, being a creple from his mothers wombe, and neuer had walked. The same hearde Paule preach, which beholding him, and perceyuing that he had faith to be whole, sayde with a lowde voyce. I saye to thee in the name of Iesus Christ, stande vpright on thy feete. And he start vp and walked. And when the people saw what Paule had done, they lift vp their voyces, saying in the speach of Lycaonia: Goddes are come downe to vs in the lykenesse of men. And they called Barnabas Iupiter, and Paule Mercurius, bicause hee was the Preacher. Then Iupiters priest which dwelt before their Citie, brought Oxen and garlandes vnto the porch, and woulde haue done sacrifice with the people.



When our Lorde and Sauour Iesus Christ fyrst sent forth his Apostles to preache the Gospell, he warned them of nothing so diligently, as of persecutions that shoulde come vnto them in going about that busynesse. Of these he foretolde they shoulde suffer both many and grieuous, not hereby meaning, through feare to dismay them, but to arme them with fayth against troubles foresene, that thereby they might learne to ouercome them. Paule and Barnabas the chosen vessels of Christ well vnderstode this thing, who at the speciall commaundement of the holye ghost were sent forth, as we hearde before, to preache among the Gentyles. For they vse such fayth and constancie in their office and charge, that after persecution, as men increased with more force and strength, they returne with more alacritie to their office againe. For being driven out of Antioch, they fylle Iconium with the doctrine of Christ. Agayne, beynst expelled Iconium, by reason of a sedition there rayled, they come to Lystra and Derba, and there they beginne to teach. And it is sayde, they preached the Gospell, least any man might thinke they had chaunged their doctrine for their enemies pleasure. Their constancie is set forth to be imitated of all men; to thende that they which will seeme the true worshippers of Christ, shoulde giue no place to the wicked enemies of the worde.

worde. For he is unworthy of Christ, that more setteth by the friendship of this untoward and adulterous worlde, than by the glory of Christ. Howbeit, because mention was made of myracles, whereby God gaue testimony to the Apostles doctrine, now Luke rehearseth one myracle among a great many, which by reason of the effect falling out thereof, seemed verie worthy to be declared. For the more profite that may come vnto vs by the consideration thereof, first we will discusse the myracle with the circumstances, and then declare the effect thereof.

Luke beginneth with the description of him, on whome the myracle was wrought. He was a townesman of Lystra many wayes very miserable. For he was lame of his feete, and that from his mothers wombe, so that thereby it appeareth his disease was incurable, such as they be for the most part, that cleave to vs from our natiuitie and birth. It is also added that he neuer went on his feete or walked. So diligent a description of this Creple, maketh for the certaintie of the myracle, & that the power of Christ might appeare the more euident, in whose name not long after he was healed. Here is to be obserued, how Christ commonly setteth forth the glory of his name, by them which eyther are sicke of incurable diseases from their natiuitie, or else are otherwise in great calamitie. Such an one we reade the blinde man was, whom Christ restored to his sight. Such another was he that had the Palsie, who at length after he had bene .xxxviii. yeares diseased, was restored againe to his health. Such an one was the woman which had eyghtene yeares gone stouping and bowed as it were together. Such were the Demoniacs that so raged, and were by his benefyte deliuered. These thinges serue first for our consolation, that we shoulde not take the aduersities that God sendeth impatiently, considering that hereby Christ knoweth howe to fetch matter to glorifie his name by. For God so little hateth vs therefore, that rather by bearing them patiently, he maketh vs the instruments of his glory. Furthermore, they make for our instruction, that we rashly ryde not on them, whome God hath punished with any deformities or blemishes of nature. For according to the saying of Salomon, he that derideth the poore, contemneth god his maker: so is he very wicked, which by tauntes and scornes nicketh them whom God hath chastened or afflicted with his hande. Which thing is the cause that the lawe pronounceth them accursed, that layeth a stumbling blocke in the blindes waye, or curseth the deafe.

Let vs see what this Creple did, before he was made whole. He heard Paule preach and beleued he should be made whole. Whereby it appeareth that Paule preached of the saluation of Christ. Which when the creple heard to be confirmed with many myracles, he conceyued also good hope of his restitution, who by like had also some secret suggestion of the holy spirite, forasmuch as there is no promises vniuersall, that promiset health of bodye to all that beleue in the name of Christ. Luke ment to shewe the cause of his saluation, where he sayth he beleued. For all the Scripture teacheth vs that by faith we are made partakers both of Christ, and of all his benefytes, and Christ many times teacheth vs the same, saying when he healed any: Be it done vnto thee according to thy fayth, or thy fayth hath saued thee, or made thee whole. It is very worthy to be considered, how first it is sayde he hearde, and afterwarde mention is made of his beleefe, which he

gate

1. The myracle of the Creple that was healed.

The miserable state of the Creple.

John. 9.

John. 5.

Luke. 13.

Math. 8.

Deut. 27.

Leuit. 19.

The Creple heareth the Gospell, and beleueth.

Math.11.

1. Cor. 3.

Rom. 10.

Iohn. 5.

The Creple
is miracu-
lously healed.

A figure of
the redemp-
tion of man.

and a figure

Esay. 53.

Gene. 8.

gatte by hearing the worde. This teacheth vs after what sort and meanes fayth commeth vnto vs. It is manifest that faith is the gift of God, and that it consisteth not in the will, eloquence, or wisdom of manne. For no man knoweth the father but the sonne, and hee to whome the sonne will open him. And God vseth men for Ministers and instrumentes of his worde, when he meaneth to teach men his word, according to that saying of Paule. We be the Ministers of God by whome you haue beleueed, euen as the Lorde gaue euery man grace. Therefore whosoever will attaine vnto fayth, must diligently harken to the worde of God. For how shall they beleue, except they haue hearde? howe shall they heare without a Preacher? for faith commeth by hearing, and hearing by the worde of God. Wherefore Christ ioyning both these together, sayth: He that heareth my word, and beleueth in him that sent me, hath life euerlasting. These things serue for commendation of the outward word, that we contemne it not, nor imagine another word of God, nor search for such wayes of fayth as the Saintes neuer knewe of. Which who so doe, they lye open commonly to the assaults of the Deuill, and are troubled with marueylous illusions, and fare like men, which hearing howe God giueth the increase of corne, leaue of tillage, a thing that God hath ordeyned for the maintenance of man.

After this, Luke sheweth the myracle. For Paule well beholding this Creple, perceyued certaine tokens of fayth in him, which coulde not be without some secret working of the holy spirite. For who is able by a mans countenance, which is the most variable and deceyueable thing that is, to iudge surely of any mannes faith: it must needes therefore be the suggestion of the spirite, that certified Paule of this lame mannes fayth. Then turning about vnto him, he giueth him perfyte helth of his body. And as it is written in certaine auncient coppes of great credite, he sayth: I saye vnto thee, in the name of Iesus Christ stande vpright vpon thy feete. For it is not credible, that those fyrst wordes wherein the name of Christ is alleaged, were of Paule omitted (as it is read in the common coppes and translation) bicause this was the onely ende and marke both of the Apostles doctrine and myracles, to bring men to beleue that Christ was their sauour. And this worke on both sides proceeding of faith, wanted not a prosperous successe. For he by and by which hitherto had alwayes bene lame, start vp and walked. Thus God by this myracle gaue testimonie to the Apostles doctrine, as yester day was declared. And bicause the myracles of Christ and the Apostles commonly set forth vnto vs, the maner of our saluation and redemption, therefore we will in this lame man briesly touch the same.

This lame man or Creple is a paterne or example of the state and condition of vs all, yea, of all mankind. For as this man is lame, and that from his mothers wombe: euen so all we be weake and lame vnto all things belonging to our saluation. And this infyrmitie cleaueth to vs, euen from our mothers wombe, as who be conceived and borne in sinne. And if we consider our life passed, we shall see that we neuer walked, to say, in the wayes of God which ledd vs to the inheritance of eternall life. For we haue all strayed out of the waye like sheepe, euery one of vs hath followed his owne wayes. And God himselfe testifieth, that the imaginations of men are euill euen from their childehoode. Therefore looke in what case this lame man was, as touching his body, & the same case be we all in as concerning our

our soule, and loke howe farre the soule passeth the bodie, and in so much more miserable a case it shall appeare we be. Therefore there is no health in our selues, but we must needs looke it without our selues, even there where this same man founde it. He heard the Gospell of Iesus Christ, and by his power, he beleued he shoulde be made whole, and by faith obtayned his desire. We must go the selfsame way to be saued. Lette vs heare the Gospell, and beleue in Iesus Christ, which is preached in the same Gospell, and streightwaie we shall be saued. He it is that deliuereth all them from their sinnes that beleue in him, because he is made sinne for vs, that we through him might be made that righteousnesse, that is acceptable before God. It is he that regenerateth vs, and who by the immortall & eternall seede of heavenly generation healeth the sores and maladies of our corrupt nature. It is he that instructeth vs with fresh force, so that we that were not able of our selues to thinke one good thought, are able by him to doe all things, and as long as we abide in him, we bring forth much fruite. And because he only is able to worke these things, he only is to be taken for our sauiour, and we being in misery and like to perishe, must out of hande seeke for him to be our Phisition and none other. Also we are taught by example of this lame man, what the dutie of them is, whome Christ hath thus healed and deliuered. He at Pauls calling start vp by and by and walked. So when Christ calleth vs, let vs forthwith rise vp out of the myze, wherin we haue to long sticke, & casting away the works of our corrupt & blind flesh, let vs walk in the ways of the Lord. These things might be more copiously dilated, & with many examples amplified, but it may suffice by these few words to giue occasion to think further herof, to those which are feruent in studie of godlines.

Nowe come we to the seconde part of this place, where the effect of the myracle is described, which fell out farre otherwise, than Paule purposed. For as by his doctrine, so by the myracle, he ment to trayne his hearers vnto Christ. But they take occasion thereby to start from Christ. For being deceyued with the olde fables of Poetes, they suppose the Apostles are Goddes, which tooke vpon them the fourme or similitude of men, and so came downe into the earth. And perhaps they called to minde the comming downe of Iupiter, and Mercurie to Lycaon their progenitor. For these two (cried they) were come downe from heauen, and most foolishly applied their names vnto the Apostles. For they say Barabas is Iupiter, either because he was the auncienter man, or else because of his graue countenance, and they thinke Paule is Mercury the gods interpreter & messenger, because he spake vnto the people. And iumpe at that time cometh Iupiters Priest, which more pricketh these mad men forward. For bringing Oren & garlands with him, he maketh preparation for a sacrifice, according to the maner of the Gentyles. This is a most notable example teaching vs, howe easily mans nature swarueeth from true godlynesse, vnto superstition and ydolatrie, and howe harde a thing it is to put errors away which haue bredde in vs from our tender yeares. Not long before, these people of Lycaonia gaue eare to Paule, preaching of Christ. They sawe a myracle also wrought in the name of Christ. Yet the olde perswasion of the Goddes comming downe vnto the earth, remaineth still in their mindes, and they take occasion of foule error, of that whereof they shoulde haue catched holde of godlynesse. Nowe be it, we all confesse that they were both foolishly and wickedly deceyued. But

howe

2. Cor. 5.

Iohn. 15.
Phil. 4.2. Howe they
of Listra were
affected at
the myracle.

Ouid, Meta. 1.

Olde errors
are hardely
put awaye.

The begin-
ning and go-
ing forwarde
of Idolatry.

howe more foolish than these, are the Papistes & which yet vse to bragge of the name of Christ. They confesse the Apostles are but men, and the seruants of Christ, whose ministerie it pleased him to vse in setting forth his kingdome. And yet they make Gods of them, and attribute vnto them those things which belong to God onely, and ought to be ascribed to no creature, without y^e prophane contempt of the true & liuing God. For they teach vs, y^e they are to be inuocated in daungers, and prescribe vnto them their diuers properties & prerogatiues as foolish as euer the heathen did in their Gods, appoynting one a Patrone for prisoners, another for those in daunger of shipwracke, another for traueylers by the way, & other for those in perill of fyre. And bicause they cannot tell when they haue played the foolcs ynough, where they confesse that these Saints haue suffred death for Chrystes sake, yet they ascribe vnto them a great part of the glozy of Christ, feygning that they are intercessors and aduocates vnto God for them, and making their bowes and prayers vnto them. Let vs be ashamed therefore to take such paynes in confuting the follye of the Gentyles, seeing there is much more follye to be founde among the professors of Chrystes religion. Furthermore, the holy ghost setteth out vnto vs in this example, the beginning and proceeding of Idolatrie. The beginning of all error hath bene the ignorance of the true God, and for that men woulde after the blage of the Gentyles, call the nature & essence of God, to the iudgement of mans reason. Which error brought in the multitude of Gods, and the grosse and absurde opinions that men had of them. Of this followed another error that where they thought there were many Gods, they iudged euery person and thing whereby they had any benefyte and commoditie to be a God. Hereof it came to passe, that they counted the starres of heauen, the elementes, beastes and men to be gods, whose pedegrues, & tombes, and monuments, were to be seene vpon earth. Now these false and counterfeite Gods, must nedes haue sacrifices, and worshippings. Then were holy dayes deuised, altars erected, temples builded, sacrifices killed, pictures and Images hong and set vp, and infinite such like deuises, of auncient superstition brought in. Of all which thinges the Priestes were the Captaines and Ringleaders, who by this stuffe sought their priuate honoz and gayne. And if now a man would compare the doings these many yeares among Christians, with these thinges, he shall fynde no difference betwene the olde and newe superstition, more than that the names of the Goddes being chaunged, the same rites and sacrifice are still retayned, and the errour is so much the more detestable, bicause vnder the pretence and name of them, which willingly lost their liues for the glozy of Christ, the glozy of God the father, and of his Christ is defaced. And the multitude of Priestes which hereby perceyued such plenty of gayne growing vnto them, encreased the ignorance of the people. But how much this doing offended the true worshippers of God, Paules oration following, abundantly sheweth. Let vs learne to knowe God by the Scriptures, to worshippe him in spirite and truth, to call vppon him onely in our nedes and distresses, and to giue thanks to him onely, when we be deliuered out of daungers, in the name of his sonne Iesus Christ: to whome be all prayse, honoz, power, and glozy for euer. Amen.

The. lxxxviii. Homelie.

WHEN the Apostles Barnabas and Paule heard this, they rent their clothes, and ranne in among the people, crying and saying: Sirs, why doe you thus? We are mortall men like vnto you, and preach vnto you that you shoulde turne from these vanities, vnto the liuing God, which made heauen and earth, the sea, and all things that are therein: the which in times past suffered all nations to walke in their owne wayes. Neuerthelesse, he left not himselfe without witnesse, in that he shewed his benefites from heauen, giuing vs rayne and fruitfull seasons, filling our hearts with foode and gladnesse. And with the sayings scarce restrayned they the people, that they had not done sacrifice vnto them.



Man through the fall of sinne, did not onely lose his former dignitie wherein he was created, but also had the light of his reason wherewith before he bled to beholde God and his proceedings, so extinguished, that he was not able by his owne capacitie and vnderstanding to attayne vnto the knowledge of those things that belonged vnto the spirite of God. Which thing was the cause that he not onely deceyued himselfe through his owne imaginati- ons, but also perniciously abused those thinges, that God had ordeyned, whereby to bring him to knowledge. Examples hereof appeare euery where in the histories of all ages, and this is one very notable that falleth out among these people of Lystra. For Paule and Barnabas preach vnto them the Gospell of Jesus Christ. And no doubt but they bled as great diligence in preaching to them, as we reade they bled in other places. Besides their teaching they shewed a myracle, whereby a certaine lame man was through the name and power of Christ restored to his limmes againe: and so was it declared by the very deede selfe, that Christ was such an one as the Apostles preached he was, that is to say, a most mightie restorer & redeemer of mans decayed nature. But what preuailed all these thinges with the men of Lystra, which being destitute of the light of the holy ghost, were led with the blinde reason of their flesh. They learne not to knowe Christ hereby. They take no occasion by such a myracle to glorifie him. But according to the nature and propertie of man, taking holde of euery thing next them, sticke onely in the Apostles, wonder onely at them, and thinke they are the onely workers of the myracle, and without anye regarde had vnto Jesus Christ, prepare godly honor and sacrifices for them. And it had bene a tolerable thing, if they of Lystra onely, whome custome of Gentyle superstition had long bewitched, had thus offended. But the infection of this example ranne so farre, that among the professours of Chrilles name, the chiefe point of godlynesse and religion seemed to stande in the worshiping of Saintes, vnto whome by reason of the myracles wrought by them in times past, sicke persons, prisoner's, men in danger on the seas, and other where, used to make their prayers, to erect altars, to make Temples, and to builde Churches, and to offer all kinde of sacrifices, having in the meane season little or no regard at all of Chrilles merit, in whom only the Apostles

and Martyrs shewed vs all hope of saluation. The madnesse of these people deserueth more at large to be confuted. But this present place is sufficient to confute them, where it is declared howe the Apostles toke this doing of the people of Lystra.

The Apostles put away worshiping from them by their gestures.

First, he liuely describeth the Apostles gestures, whereby they abundantly declared howe much this kinde of honoz displeased them. For they rent their garments after the maner of their Nation, which was a gesture of those that tooke great griefe & indignation, by reason of some intollerable blasphemie, as appeareth by the example of Ezechias and Caiaphas, of the which Ezechias hearing the blasphemous sayings of Rabfaces the Chaldee, declared his sorowe and indignation by this gesture: and the other sitting as a Judge vpon Christes cause, did egregiously counterfeyte a minde abhorring blasphemie by the same gesture. But the Apostles which bled alwaye to preferre the glozy of Christ, before all priuate affections, did not counterfeyte or dissemble in this place. And being not satisfied with tearing of their garments, they leape into the throng of the people, as menne ready to quench some publike fyre, which they being straungers and forreiners coulde not doe without daunger of their life. Furthermore, they goe not about their matters with bare wordes only, but with crying out, that a man woulde thinke they had forgotten all modestie and myldenesse, being in their priuate cases knowne to be most modest and patient. Therfore by this example may be gathered, what the nature of the godly is, and with what feruencie of zeale they vse to strue for the glozy of God. It seemeth to them an intollerable blasphemie, when men go about to giue vnto them, or to any other creature, any diuine honour. They haue a carefull regarde vnto the couenaunt of God and to his lawe, the chiefe and principall point wherof is, to acknowledge and worshippe him onely as our God. And because they knewe he was a gelous God, and a seuerer reuenger of his honoz, they also must needs be zelously incensed, when they see Gods glozy openly taken from him, and giuen vnto other. The lyke example we sawe before in Iohn and Peter the Apostles, cap. 3. and. 10. And it appeareth the Angels are of the same minde & iudgement as the faithfull messengers of God, See the Apoc. 19. and. 22. We learne by this place, what we ought to thinke of them, that dare arrogate and chalenge to themselves any godly honoz, such as we reade sometime Herodes Agrippa did Caligula, Domitian, Dioclesian, and such like filthy men, & monsters of nature. And now adayes we see the Bishops of Rome chalenge vnto them y title of holinesse, the forgiveness of sinnes, and absolute power to doe all things, without checke, inasmuch that no man must reprehende them, though they carie headlong with them into hell infinite heapes of mennes soules. These kinde of men can by no argument reprove themselves more euidentlye to be destitute of Christs spirit, seeing the Apostles of Christ so abhorred such glozy, with the desire wherof these men are so rauished, that for this glories sake they feare not ouerly to seduce the whole worlde with false doctrine, but also to fill all places full with fighting and warres. Moreouer, it appeareth by this example, that they worshippe not the Saintes, which vse to inuocate them, and outwardly to worshippe them, which thing God challengeth to himselfe alone: for what else doe these men as much as in them lyeth but make them the vessels of Gods wrath & ignominie, which while they liued

on

on earth, bent all their endeouour and studie to haue God glorified. For it is not to be thought, that now they are in heauen, they haue chaunged their opinion, or that God hath chaunged his minde and will, which in times past, sayde by his Prophete: I am the Lorde: this is my name, and my glory will I giue to none other. Yet a more euident demonstration of all these things shall appeare in the Apostles Oration, immediatly following, euery part whereof we shall peruse in order.

The proposition and summe of their oration is, that neyther the Apostles, nor anye other Creatures ought to be inuocated or worshipped, but onely the true and liuing God. Which thing where they might plainly haue pronounced it without any circumstance of wordes: yet they thought good to expresse and set out their meaninges by an interrogation, saying: Sirs, why doe you thus? These thinges agree very well with the gestures which euen now we were declared. For in fewe wordes they plainly testifie, that that worship wherein a number now a dayes thinketh the chiefe praise of godlynesse and religion consisteth, is impious, balawfull, and abhominable. And let no man object vnto me, that the Apostles were offended with that Gentillike worship and names of counterfeyt Gods, but woulde haue taken it in good part perhaps, if they had honoured them in such sort as now a dayes they are honoured in the Popes kingdome. For they simplye abhorre all kinde of worship, saying that such honoz belongeth to God onelye and alone.

This appeareth most euidently in the second part of the Oration, which conteyneth the confyrmation of the Proposition, fortifyed with two strong arguments. The fyrst is taken of their owne person or nature, where they say, we are mortall men like vnto you, as though they shoulde saye: It is an absurde and foolishe part to honoz and worship them as Goddes, which are of the same nature that we our selues be, and subiect to such infyrmities as we be. For both we be sinners, and by reason of sinne, are subiect vnto all such troubles and miseries, as fall out in this life. The selfe same argument we hearde that Peter vsed before to Cornelius falling prostrate before his feete, which sayde vnto him, Arise, for I my selfe also am a man. And if this argument be well weyghed, it shall appeare that all worshipping of Creatures is hereby ouerthrowne. For if men be therefore vnworthy of diuine honoz, bicause they be men, what shall we say of other creatures, which are all inferior vnto man, as which were created for mannes sake and vse to doe him seruice: from which order the Angells also must not be excluded, forsomuch as they are spirites of administration, sent out for the ministry of them which shall be heyres of saluation. And we will not here admitte their caullation, which say, that by this argument worshipping of Saints is not refelled, bicause they are deliuered from all kinde of miseries and infyrmities, and are made partakers of the heauenly glozve. For to graunt them that by this argument nothing can be gathered against them: yet are there infynite other places of Scripture that teach vs, they ought no more to be inuocated now, than when they liued here on earth. For the holye men in the Prophete testifie, that euen now they are ignorant, in what state and condicion we be. And this agreeth verie well with beatitude or blisse, which they enioy not, if they be faine epyther to behold or reuenge our miseries. Furthermore, there is a grounded and inuolable principle of re-

E say. 42.
The Apostles put from them worship by speaking.

t. The proposition.

q. The confirmation.

Hebrues. 1.

E say. 63.

Deut. 6.
Math. 4.

ligion, where we are taught that we must worship and honor one God onely. And if men neyther while they are living, neyther when they are dead, must have any godly honor, who can sufficiently laugh at their folly, or rather bewaile it, which turne and transforme these Saints into the works of their owne handes, that is to say, into dumbe Images :

The other argument the Apostles set from their office, saying they came vnto them and preached the gospel, to thintent that they should turne from these vanities, & begin to worship the living God, which was the creator of heauen and earth, the sea, and all things contained in them. And thus they plainly protest that they may not suffer any godly honour to be done vnto themselves without manifest impietie and offence vnto God. For who will not take him for a trayterous ambassadour, and worthy of all punishment, which vnder the name and pretence of his king, would aduance his owne cause, and studie to establishe his owne tyrannie among them, whome he ought to bring to his Princes obedience, who would not thinke him a wicked captife, which woulde vnder the pretence of olde acquaintaunce and friendship, bring another mans wife home to his owne house : But it is euident that the Apostles and other Ministers of the worde are Christes Legates and Ambassadors, and the Bridegromes friendes, and that it is their dutie to bring men to the obedience of faith, and to marrye them to Christ, whome he hath redeemed with the price of his bloude, and made his vnspotted spouse. Thus Iohn the Baptist reasoneth of his office with his Disciples, and Paule in other places. And therfore in this place he refuseth these honors offered him with such detestation, because he seeth he should incurre both treason and fornication, if he shoulde committe the like thing. Woulde God they did well obserue these things, which in these dayes thinke it most godlynesse and religion, to sende the simple and vnlearned Communitie vnto Creatures, or else teache them to seeke saluation in the merites of men.

Iohn 3.
2. Cor. 11.

All worship
is vaine, de-
uised with-
out the worde
of God.

Math. 15.
Esay. 29.

The dutie
of the minis-
ters of the
worde.

Ierem. 1.

Moreouer, it is worthy to be considered, how the Apostles call this worship which they of Lytra would haue done vnto them, vanitie. For hereby we gather, that all such religion is vaine, & of no force as is deuised of mans imagination, without the worde of God, specially if it tende not to the worship of God onely, but vnto creatures, to whome God will not impart his glory. Herevnto agree the things which Christ alleageth out of the prophet : They worship me in vain, teaching the doctrines of men. Let the Papists here make answer, whose religion, as it chiefly consisteth in honouring of creatures : so it standeth vpon none other foundation, than mens traditions.

Furthermore, the Apostles in these wordes, comprehend the dutie of those that are mynisters of the worde, whyle they affirme, that their preaching is to the ende, that men should turne from the vayne worshyping of creatures, vnto the onely lyving God. Therefore the saythfull ministers of Christ must ioyne these two thinges together, that is, they must both ouerthrowe false religion, and plant the true. Wherevnto is to be referred, that saying of the Prophet. Beholde, thys day haue I appoynted thee, to roote vp and destroy, and to buylde vp and plant. For as in husbandry and tyllage, all the labor taken in plowing and watering is in vayne, except the things that hinder the cornes growth, be rooted bp, and good sēde sowne : so in the husbanding and dressing of the mynde, they haue most vnfruitfully labou-

red,

red; which haue not paynefully and carefully ioyned both these together. Therefore the men of our dayes commit double offence. For there are some men that so abhorre Antichrist, and his wicked religion, that being occupied onely in ouerthrowing the same, they haue no remembraunce to restore a gayne true and sincere religion. Agayne there are other some which will haue men taught the true religion by preaching the word, but will not haue abuses and superstition touched, because they would not haue the displeasure of the world. And these latter sort hope that superstition will fall of it owne accorde, when men are come to the knowledge of the true God: and they perceyue not that there is no place for the knowledge of God in mens mindes, tyll these superstitions be removed. Therefore who so meaneth profitably and with commendation to traueyle in matters of religion, must ioyne both these (as is sayde) together.

Thirde, the Apostles teach vs to know what maner of God he is, euen the maker of heauen and earth, the Sea and all that in them is. Such a God the scripture declareth euery where he is, and such an one we openly professe hym to be, in the articles of our fayth, according to the tradition of the Apostles. But they which confesse hym to be the Creatour, must also needes confesse that he is a gouernour. For it is not mete that we shoulde ymagine God to be such a worke mayster, as hath no regarde or care of his worke. And Dauid confesseth in dede that he dwelleth on high, but yet that he beholdeth whatsoener is done in heauen and in earth. For by his prouidence it cometh to passe, that the poore of lowe degree are aduanced to princely dignitie, that kingdomes are conueyed and transferred from one to an other, that women that are barren, are made fruitfull, that the earth bringeth forth all maner of fruites, that the seas ebbe and flowe, that all the world is tossed and turned with such interchaungeable course and varietie of seasons. And to conclude, there is nothing so excluded from Gods prouidence, but that it numbeth euen the dyuers wayes of byrdes flying, the flowers of the fyerde, and heares of our head. By these things is their doting confuted, which say that this world is eternall, which is the fyrst step vp to impietie. For hereof it will follo, that all thinges come to passe by chaunce, and that eyther there is no God at all, or else that he walketh by and downe ydely in heauen, and hath no regarde what is done on earth. Dauid most diligently describeth this secte of men, which thus ymagine and sayne, in his Psalm 14. and. 53. But at this day this secte so raigneth, that a man shall see fewe which are in dede perswaded that God is the creator and gouernour of all thinges. But the ende of these men Peter trimly setteth forth in his last Epistle and thirde Chapter.

But let vs returne to the Apostles, who in the thirde part of their oration, confute the obiections that might be made against them, such as was prescription of tyme, and vniuerse consent almost of all the world. Which arguments at this day are wont to be alleaged against the truth. For it seemeth an vniuerse and an absurde thing, that so many should haue erred, so many yeres together, & that the truth should now at the length, be knowne but to a small number of men, and those of small name and fame. But the Apostles aunswere these things in fewe wordes: God (say they) in times past suffered all nations to walke in their owne wayes. In these wordes, I see two arguments. The one that the Gentyles walked not in the preceptes of

God is the
Creator and
gouernour of
all thinges.

Psal. 113.

14. The cons-
utation.

Roma.1.

1. Cor. 2.

Psal. 106.

Luke. 12.

Math. 7.

Actes. 20.

2. Thel. 2.

God is not to
be charged
for mens I-
dolatrie.

of God, but in their owne wayes and intentions: therefore we maye not take the in for an example therein to followe. The other is that this thing fell out through the permission and sufferance of God, not that he was pleased with their superstition, but that the presumption of such curyous men so deserued, who (as Paule in an other place sayth) woulde seeke further in the mysteries of God then mans reason coulde attaine to, and were not content with the ordinarie meanes, whereby God had appoynted to be knowne. This place teacheth vs that the wayes of man in hys saluation are blinde and deceyueable, bicause the naturall man (as was said in the begynning of thys sermon) perceyueth not the thinges that belong vnto God. Except therfore mans wisdom submit it selfe vnto the word of God, it cannot attayne to the true knowledge of saluation, yea the higher it shall mount in perswasion of hir owne habilitie, the deeper she shall fall into the gulfes of errors. Therefore it is a great blindnesse of theirs, that thinke matters of religion and controuerlies rysing about the same, can by mans reason and deuise be calmed and appeased. These men doe, as if one should appoynt those for Iudges of causes, that can neyther see nor heare, we are further admonished by this place, that al they are miserably beguyled, which alleage the multitude in matters of religion, & affirme that the Church cannot erre. For it is euident in all ages, that the greater number haue bene deceyued with false opinions of God, & haue not truly serued hym. Only Noe with his familie, which were but eyght persons, followed an opinion of God & religion contrary to al the world, & hath God to confyrme & warrant of the same. And the Patriarches a very fewe in number, as bright starres shining in the dark hymnament were scattred abroad among the vnbelaueing Gentyles, what shall we say of the people of Israel, the peculjars of the Lord? Read we not, that they and their Byschops most fowly and wickedly erred when contrarie to the commaundement of God, they enterprised to cast a Calfe, & (as the Prophet saith) turned the maiesty of their God into the similitude of an Ore that eateth hay? And to speake of Gods newe people, doth not Christ call it a small flock, and sayth he not they are fewe which go in at the narrow gate, vnto saluation? yea Paule sayth, that grievous Wolues shall rise vpon euen of those of the congregati- on, which shall not spare the flock, and he sayth also that Antichrist shall sit aloft in the temple of God. Let them cease therefore to object vnto vs the consent of multitude and authoritie of the Church, which resist the open veritie. We require the worde of God, and voyce of Christ, which ought to be the onely touch and rule, to iudge all controuerlies in doctrine.

Furthermore, least anye man should put God in faulte of the Gentyles ydolatrie and superstition, the Apostles ble a preoccupation or pre- uention, in the which they clære God of all maner of fault. For, (he saye they) hath alwayes bozne wytnesse of himselfe, his nature and pleasure, and hath shewed his inuisible nature and essence vnto the worlde, by hys visibill woorkes. And omitting those great and wonderfull woorkes of God, which passe mans capacitie and reach, he rehearseth his daylie woorkes, whereby he doth good vnto men, that euen for this cause they were able to drawe any man to the diligent consideration of so soueraigne a God. For who is so blinde or dull, that he perceyueth not the seasonable tymes, and the increase of victuals springing thereof? who will say these things come

to

to passe by chaunce, that are knyt together so fast by order of nature, that if any thing commeth beside the wonted course of nature, it is thought a wonder: And I pray you what an vnthankfulnesse is it, not to acknowledge that God, which alone prouydeth vs not of necessaries onely, but also giueth vs abundance of those things that are delectable and pleasaunt: O what excuse of ignorance can they alleage for themselves, which as often as they take their meate, are admonished of Gods liberallitie towards vs: In this place there is a profitable doctrine, and for the beating downe of the superstitious curiositie of some persons, verie necessarie, that is to say, who is the authoz of the influences of heauen, and the increase and yelde of the earth. The Apostles say of God the Creator, that he gyueth vs rayne from heauen, and fruitefull seasons, replenishing vs with foode and gladnesse. Here vnto agreeth the scripture in euery place. Dauid diligently accounteth the same among the other workes of God, saying: He couereth the heauen with clowdes, and prepareth rayne for the earth, and maketh the grasse to growe vpon the mountaynes. He giueth fodder vnto the cattell, and feedeth the yong Rauens that call vpon him: He gyueth snowe lyke wooll, and scattereth the hoare frost lyke ashes, he casteth forth his yse like morsels. He sendeth out his word & melteth them, he bloweth with his winde and the waters flowe. **Againe:** He watreth the hylles from aboue, the earth is filled with the fruit of his workes. He bringeth forth grasse for the cattell, and herbe for the vse of men, that he may bring foode out of the earth. &c. I omit infinite other testimonies which might be brought. But God moderateth all these thinges according to his iust will and pleasure, whyle he sendeth plenteous increase to them that walke in his lawe, and scarcitie and barrennesse to the disobedient, whereof we haue euident examples. Here the Astrologers are confuted, who attributing these thinges to the position and placing of the Planets, reuoke and bring in agayne the prophane names of Gods, and almost all kinde of gentilitie. The superstitious are here also reprovved, which make the saints authozs hereof, which aske rayne & seasonable weather of them, hauing Challes and service appoynted for that ende and purpose. Let both these sortes see what God sayth in Hoseas. chap. 1. And let vs followe the Apostles doctrine, and acknowledge one onely God to be the authoz and gouernour of all these thinges, which is neyther bound to the course of Planets, nor is not subiect to nature, but according to his good pleasure and iust iudgement, moderateth and ordereth all things.

Nowe Luke declareth the effect of the Apostles sermon, and sayth, that they of Lystra coulde scarce be restrayned with all this weyght of wordes and sentences, but that they woulde doe sacrifice vnto them. So forward and obstinate man is in retayning of superstition, yet is the obstinacie of our time greater. These men coulde with one Sermon be prohibited, where nowe adays there are numbers, which with many yeares traueyle, and daylie sermons can not be brought into the right way. Let vs therefore pray vnto God the father, that he will illuminate both them and vs with his holy spirite, and bring vs to the true and wholesome knowledge of him, and his sonne Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honor, power, and glory, for ever. Amen.

Psal. 147.

Psal. 104.

Leuit. 26.
Deut. 28.The effect of
the Apostles
sermon.

The

The.lxxxxix.Homely.

THY THER came certaine Iewes from Antioch and Iconium, which when they had obtrayned the peoples consent, and had stoned Paule, drewe him out of the Citie, supposing he had bene deade. Howbeit, as the Disciples stood rounde about him, he arose vp and came into the Citie. And the next daye he departed with Barnabas to Derba. And when they had preached to that Citie, and had taught many, they returned againe to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, and strengthened the Disciples soules againe, and exhorted them to continue in the fayth, affirming that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdome of God.



Sour Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ laboureth incessantly to maintaine and defende the saluation of mankinde: so Satan is altogether occupied in ouerthrowing the kingdome of God, and in pulling men from the waye of saluation. Hereof in this hystorie haue we a most euident example. For as the Apostles were preaching at Lystra, fyrst Satan moued certaine superstitious persons to giue diuine honour vnto them, and no doubt but this was the drift of that malicious enimie of mannes saluation, to haue tripped the Apostles by tempting them with ambition, wheras he had attempted Christ before with the same. But his enterpryse cometh not to passe. For, Paule and Barnabas perceyuing this craft of the Deuill, and being enflamed with more zeale than before, defended most constantly the glory of the true God: so that now the townermen of Lystra beginne to taste of the knowledge of God, and to forsake the errors of their forefathers. Wherefore Satan proueth another way, and armeth against them the professed enemies of the truth, by whose meanes he had caused the Apostles at other times also, to giue place & to go backe. For he calleth certaine Iewes from Antioch and Iconium, who with flanders had so incensed the mindes of those of Lystra against the Apostles, that they like madde men rose against Paule, would haue stoned him, and haled him halfe for deade out of the gates of their Citie. And the very vse of all this hystorie is, to learne vs to beware of Satans sleightes, wherewith he sleeth to vndermine the truth, and to imitate the constancie of the Apostles in withstanding them. But because there are other things in the same, seruing both for our instruction and comfort, it shall be very profytable to consider all the circumstances of this contention.

Satan hath
euerywhere
his instru-
mentes.

First, the same parties are the beginners of this disturbance, who before had troubled the Apostles, even the Iewes, of whose horrible blindness and desperate obstinacie in contending against Christ, hath bene already oftentimes spoken. But here is to be marked a notable sleight and pollicie of Satan, in that he bringeth these men from Antioch and Iconium, as olde tried souldiours. For his chiefe care is to haue euerywhere his instruments, whereby he may ouerthrowe the kingdome of Christ, and establish his owne. Wherefore if he perceyue that men are not fyt ynough for his purpose in one place, he will bring other from other places, by whose

meanes

meanes and industrie he will compasse his purpose. Hereof might manye examples be brought, if olde examples needed, where dayly are abundant. For the like subtiltie he vseth in these dayes, procuring Bishops and ydle Monkes to creepe in, and maintayne the counsels of the wicked, and to incense the vnlearned Comminaltie with slaunders against Chyistes doctrine, inuegling the Nobles with fayre promises, and somtimes with gifts and rewardes, labouring all that they may, to destroy the fruite of the Gospel, euen in the springth and blade. And this it shall be very profytable for vs well to marke, that we may labour with no lesse traueyle and study (yet godly and voyde of all guile) to defende and set forth the truth.

Secondly, we haue to consider the inconstancie of the Commons and people. For they which not long befoze toke the Apostles for Goddes, and prepared to doe sacrifice vnto them, being sodenly perswaded by forreners, and men of another profession and religion, go about to put them to cruell death. What therefore shall we thinke they woulde haue done, if they had bene pricked forwarde, eyther of their owne Nation, or of the Romaine Presidents? But this the leuitie and ticklenesse of the people, which is both forgetfull of benefytes receyued, and with detestable iniuries reward their benefactors, is not so dishonest as common in euery place. Example here of we see in the Egyptians, who being throughe Iosephes counsaile not onely preserved in time of dearth, but also aduanced to great power and glorie, yet forgotte they him almost befoze he was deade, and vbled all maner of crueltie and tyrannie against his posteritie. Moses felt euen the same, who being the protector and defender of the people of Israel, and hauing suffered all kinde of slaunders reproches, could scarce escape stoning. What neede we to speake of Dauid and diuers others, whose examples we reade in the storpes of the Gentyles, seeing it is euident Christ suffered the like? For they which called him and hayled him as their king, and with honorablenesse and great shewtes receiued him as he came into Ierusalem, shortly after toyning with the Scribes and Phariseyes, desired to haue him crucified. These examples are very profytable. For they teache vs, that we must not trust in the prayse of the people, which is so variable and inconstant. For if a man will consider but himselfe onely, he shall easily perceyue what diuers mindes and contrarie affections he shall be in at once. And thinke we that the Commons, a beast of so many heades, will alway be constant, which looke howe many heades it hath, with so many senses it is ledde; and admitteth and harkeneth euery day to the newe deuises of them, which vse their inconstancie and leuitie to their lucre and aduantage? Why rather labour we not to make our doings acceptable to God onely, with whome we knowe there is a sure rewarde laide by for vs, which neither the leuitie of the Commons, nor violence of Tyrants can take from vs.

Thirde, we haue to consider God himselfe, according to whose becke and prouidence it is manifest all thinges are ordred. He suffereth the moste faythfull Apostle of Christ, and chosen vessell of his grace, to be stoned, and that of them, whose saluation he moste desired, and for whome he prayed without ceasing. Therefore it ought not to seme a straunge or insolent thing vnto vs, if the lyke come to passe in these dayes, and we must not iudge of any mannes doctrine or fayth according to the euill successe therof, because the like fell out in times past to the Prophets, as Christ testifieth.

The inconstancie of the Commons.

The prouidence of God preserveth the godly in daungers.

Math. 5.

kkkk.i.

Let

1. Cor. 10.

Rom. 8. 14.

Math. 10.

The dutie of
Christians
towards
their brethren
in distresse.

Let vs rather comfort our selues with Gods prouidence, which appeareth in this place by many arguments. For who will not acknowledge it to be the singular working and counsaile of God, that Paule was thus stoned, and Barnabas vntouched, being Pauls companion, and whom not long before, they seemed to preferre before Paule, calling him Iupiter? Who will say but he was preserved by the assistance of God, seeing we reade none was present, that went about to resist the enterpryse of these haterained Commons? And if any man will demaunde why God assisted this man rather than Paule, surely he can render no certaine reason therefore, more than that it so lyked God, whose iudgements are truth and veritie. Yet if place may be giuen to godly coniectures, it may seeme that God therefore spared Barnabas, because he knewe he was as yet more weake, than to beare out such a brunt. For God is saythfull, and will not suffer vs to be tempted with more than we can beare. And Gods care and goodnesse seemeth towards Paule no lesse: for he preserveth him in the midst of the shovting of the people, and stones flying about his eares, so that he caught no deadly wounde, or if he had any, he recovered it. Yea, he so restored him againe, that being thought to be deade, and being drawne like a deade caryon out of the gates of the Citie, he was able the next daye following to take his iourney. Let no man therefore despayre in the middle of daungers, considering that the boundes of Gods prouidence passe the markes and doles of all daungers. For whether we liue or die, we be the Lordes, and nothing is able to seporate vs from his loue. And Paule himself teacheth vs to learne a generall doctrine of this example, in the later Epistle to Timothy cap. 3. by these wordes: Thou hast scene the experience of my doctrine, fashion of liuing, purpose, sayth, long suffering, loue, patience, persecutions, and afflictions, which came on mee at Antioch, at Iconium, and Lystra, which persecutions I suffered patiently: and from them all, the Lorde deliuered me, yea, and all they that will liue godly in Christ Iesu shall suffer persecution. Wherefore fyrst let vs laye this foundation in our minde, that nothing can come vnto vs without the ordinance and pleasure of God, who hath numbed even the heares of our head. Next, let vs thinke he ordreth all things after his righteous and holy iudgement. Thirde, let vs be fully perswaded, that he will neuer cease to take care for vs, but beareth a fatherly minde and affection to vs: and that euen then he moste careth for vs, when we seeme most in daunger of our enemies. Therefore he will deliuer vs out of all daunger, if he thinke it so meetest for our behoufe. And if it seeme not so good vnto him, which farre better knoweth our case, and what is mete for vs, than we our selues, what be we, I pray you, to replie against him? But hereof we shall haue occasion to say more about the ende of the sermon.

Nowe what did the Disciples whose minds were lightened with sounder knowledge of Christ, in all thys businesse? Did they denie their sayth and take part with the Gentyles: or were they ashamed of Paule so being stoned, and in shamefull wise haled through the Citie? No truely. But they gathered about him, by likelyhode of good will. For where they were not able to defende him against the open violence of the furious people, they doe yet as much as in them lyeth. And whome they thought to be deade, him they stande about betwayling him, and desirous to accomplishe the last dutie of buriall vnto the most balyaunt minister of Christ, as we heard

heard the faithfull at Ierusalem did befoze, when Steuen was martyzed. And yet was this a dangerous enterprize, if a man well consider the Jewes cankred hatred towardes Christ, and the rage of the people, not yet calmed by reason of the late disdayne conceived. But our Sauour Christ sayleth not to further such godlye duetie. For whome they lamented as deade, hym dyd God in such wonderfull wise restore agayne, that he by and by rose vp and went into the Citie. We are taught by this example, what duetie we owe vnto the faithfull ministers of Christ, being in daunger for doing of their duetie. First, they that are able, must faithfully helpe them being in distresse: wherein many dueties are to be considered and fall out, amongst which there is none so small, that hath not his rewarde befoze God, considering that he shall not lose his recompence, that gyueth but a Cup of colde water vnto a Disciple of Christ. And if any denie them the succour they are able to giue them, let them thinke that sayde vnto them, that Mardocheus sometyne sayde vnto Quene Hester: If thou holde thy peace at thys time, then shall the Iewes haue helpe and delyuetaunce some other wayes, and thou and thy fathers house shall perishe, Cap. 4. The seconde degree of duetie is, that they that are not able to helpe them, consent not vnto the counsell of the wicked enemies of Christ, and by al meanes possible declare that they neuer consented vnto them. The storie of the Gospell sheweth vs as example hereof in Ioseph of Arimathæa. The thirde and last is, that we comfort those, whome other tyrannouslye afflict, by all the meanes we are able: and if we lacke abillitie, yet to testifie by our teares, howe we lament their state. And let vs not be ashamed of them, in whom we knowe Christ lyeth bounde, is banished, afflicted, and put to sorrowe. This did Iosephus most faithfully perfourme, whyle he caused Christ to be honorably buried, whome his aduersaries shamefully hong on crosse. If we would nowe a dayes thus dutyfully vse our selues towardes the members of Christ, we should see God would helpe and ayde vs, beyonde our expectation. For God will not suffer the indeviours of his beloued to be lost, nor the kingdome of Christ his sonne, to be throwne downe, by the enterprises of the wicked. But let vs returne to the Apostles, and see what they did after they had escaped these broyles, of whom thus much is reported, as followeth.

The next daye following, Paule accompanied with Barnabas went from Lystra, and came vnto Derba, where he preacheth the Gospell of Iesus Christ, & bringeth many disciples vnto Christ. This is a notable and rare example of christian constancie and faithfull endeuour, that by daunger being made the more bolde and feruent, they returne againe vnto their office and duetie. Hereby is reproued the sluggishnesse of those flydebackes, which after they haue bene once in daunger, as though they had then done all their duetie, can neuer be brought againe, to suffer anye more for Christes sake. Howbeit in dede they should rather haue considered, that by reason God of late had so deliuered and helped them, they should haue bene the more incouraged and bolde. For hath God therefore set vs at libertie, to the intent we should afterwarde stande ydle and looke on, whyle others are in perill: Nay, but for this cause rather he maketh good his promise, to the ende we should stande the more boldly in the defence of his name. Paule remembring thys, coude not fynde in his heart to rest scarce one day together, and

Math. 10.

Marc. 15.

i. The Apostles made the bolder by afflictions returne to their vocation agayne.

Marc. 16.

d. They come
to the Cities
again, from
whence they
were driven.

yet it might seeme he had deserved to haue his *Quietus est*. This also is to be obserued, that wheresoeuer Luke reasoneth of the Apostles doctrine, he maketh mention of nothing but the gospell, the Ministerie and preaching whereof Christ had committed vnto them. This is a great argument of the fayth and credite which they vsed in the office committed to their charge, and also teacheth vs what ought to be preached in the Church. For if the Apostles durst not take so much vpon them, as to giue back a starte from the commaundement of Christ, and to inuolue the Church with newe traditions. Doubtlesse their boldnesse can not be excused; which now a daies impudently presume so to do, vnder the name and pretence of the Apostles.

Moreover, the Apostles returne to the three Cities; from whence they were expelled, that is, to Antioche, Iconium, and Lystra; to confirme and establishe those that they had wonne vnto Christ in the fayth. For as in ordering of an house, it is as much prayse to saue that is gotten, as to get more vnto the same: so in the Church of God, we must haue a care not onely to gette more vnto it, but also to take heede that none fall from their duetie and fayth through our negligence. And as sedge must not onely be throwne into the ground, but also be tended and cherished, that thornes and byers ouergrowe it not, so that it perishe: so the sedge of Gods worde being once sowne amongst men, must still be cherished and watered. For the parable of Christ is well knowne, concerning our enemie, which whyle we be a shepe, blyth to sowe Darnell and Corle. Therefore they are much to blame, which after they haue preached the worde, thinke they haue discharged their duetie, whereas afterwarde their diligence and industrie, is more needefull than before, that they which before began to heare and follow the voyce of Christ, be not seduced and pulled back through Satans craft. Also it is a notable example of christian loue and zeale, that Paule and Barnabas returned to them againe, who iniuriously and shamefully had intreated them, driving them out of their Cities. Let no man therefore be offended at the vnthankfulnesse of men, nor thinke it is therefore laudfull for him to leaue of his duetie, because his hearers, for whose salvation he is so carefull, lyke not of him as he deserveth. For why shoulde a man imitate him whome he thinketh worthy to be blamed? Thou thinkest them worthy to be reprehended which doe not their duetie. Why then sufferest thou thy selfe to doe worse than they, in not doing thy duetie? Remember rather that thou art the seruant of God, and therefore lookest for thy rewarde at his hande, and not of this blockishe and ingratefull world, whose proprietie it is, to requite those that doe them good with all euill. The things that came to passe vnto Moses, Dauid, the prophets, to Christ, & his Apostles, aboundantly declare the same. Yea, the hystories of the Gentiles are full of these examples. For here vnto are to be referred Aristides, Themistocles, Miltiades, Cimon, Camillus, the Scipions, the Catones, Cicero, and innumerable others, who where they were the deliuerers of their Countries from calamities, whereby the vnkinde Citizens, eyther shamefully banished their Countries, or else vnworthily put to death and kylled. But let vs diligently consider what Paule and Barnabas did, in the Cities wherevnto they returned.

td. They con-
firme the

first, it is sayde, they confirmed the myndes of the Discipels. And yet is it the worke of God onely, to rule the mindes of men, to confyrme them,
and

and to moue them after his owne pleasure. Yet the Apostles confyrme them, whose ministerie God did boughse to vse to that purpose, who where he worketh onely all things, in all men, yet for the most part he vseth his meanes, and a certayne orderly proceeding. Therefore euen as by preaching of the worde, he illuminateth mens mindes with faith: so by the same meanes, he confyrmeth mens mindes in the faith. And so must we thinke and consider hereof, least we attribute to the ministerie of manne, that which is onely the worke of God, or else make to light of the ministerie ordeyned of God. For grieuous and detestable is the error of them, which whyle they will seeme to defend the glorie of God, contempne the order appointed of God, despise the doctrine of his worde, shunne to come with the congregation, neglect prayers, and vnder the pretence of Gods holie name, liue carelesly and wickedly.

Howbeit, Luke declareth howe the Apostles confyrmed the mindes of the Disciples, saying as followeth: exhorting them to continue in the faith. Mens mindes therefore vse to be confyrmed with exhortations, taken out of the worde of God. Let vs also marke howe it is not sufficient for men, once to beleue in Christ, but that they must also abyde and continue in the true fayth. For except they so doe, the later ende will be worse than the beginning, and they are not thought worthy of the kingdome of God, which haue once layde their hande to the plough, and looke backe agayne. Hereof came it to passe, that Christ after his ascension, rebuked the Church of Ephesus, because she had lost hir former loue, and feruent zeale of fayth, but commended the Church at Thyatira, because they increased euery daye more and more in faith and godlynesse. Therefore it behooueth all congregations diligently to meditate all these thinges, that they corrupt not the laudable beginnings of fayth, with folthie falling awaye and negligence. Also let all degrees and states of men learne hereby to take hede of their office, this is a generall rule in all thinges, that it is in vaine to beginne well, except we continue on vnto the ende. In the meane whyle this place teacheth vs, that the doctrine of faith is certayne and inuolable. For it were no commendable thing to perseuere and continue in the fayth, if there were any thing in the doctrine, thereof to be amended or chaunged, which thinge is to be objected against them, who whyle they dare not openly condemne the doctrine of the Apostles, yet (saye they) there are diuers things added to it since, as necessarie to be obserued, as the things that they taught. But if a man will compare those things with the doctrine of the Apostles, he shall finde that the truth of the Apostles doctrine can not stande, if such thinges be admytted. Let vs learne therefore so to persist in the faith and doctrine of the Apostles, that we admit nothing contrarie therevnto, yea, that we beleue not an Angell, if he woulde nowe preache any newe or other gospell.

Moreouer, they put away the offence of the Crosse, which was a thing very needefull, because mannes reason most times iudgeth of fayth according as things in time fall out. And it is not vnlike but many mens mindes were marueylously tempted, seeing the Apostles doctrine was euerywhere reiected, and they still in daunger and trouble for the same. But the Apostles in a bryefe saying, giue a most effectuell comfort to the weake in faith, saying: that by many tribulations we must enter into the kingdome of heaven.

This

minds of the
Disciples.

titij. They ex-
hort manne to
perseuerance.

Math. 12.
Luke. 9.

Apocal. 2.

Galat. 1.

b. They put
away the of-
fence of the
crosse.

Luke. 9.

Psalm. 34.
Iohn. 15. 16.Iohn. 12. 14.
and. 17.

This saying hath in it two reasons very fytt to comfort vs. The fyrst is, that they say it must so be, and can not be otherwise. And common sense teacheth vs, that we must take patiently and in good worth, that that cannot be otherwise. Thus they declare in what state of lyfe the godly haue to liue in this worlde: which Christ also testifieth, is full of all maner of afflictions, whereas he commaundeth vs euerye day to take vppe our Crosse, and so to followe him. And surely if a man will marke the course of this life, he shall see nothing free from euill and miserie. For this lyfe floweth with all maner of molestations, which spring of sinne, such as are sicknesse, labor, care, watching, pouertie, alteration of the worlde, and infynite like, by reason whereof our life is compared to a moste troublesome and perillous pilgrimage, and continuall traueyle. But beside these, there are other afflictions which the worlde that cannot abyde the light, hath in store for the godlye. For hereof proceedeth it that the worlde hateth them, that they are rayled on, and put to shame, that euery man doth them iniurye, that they laye violent handes on them, that they are imprisoned, manaced, and fettered, that they are banished, lose their goodes, and suffer moste byle and horrible deathes. Thus is fulfilled the saying of Dauid: Many are the tribulations of the iust, and that Christ foretolde shoulde come vnto vs. And in all these things we must remember, that so it must be, not onely for that God maye be founde true of hys worde, but bicause it is expedient thus to tame and bydle our fleshe, and to moue vs to lothe this lyfe, and to desire the life to come. For we see in our selues, what a loue of this worlde is in our fleshe, and with howe much adoe we are brought to the desire of heavenly things. And what (thinke you) woulde come of vs, if we shoulde taste of no aduersitie in this worlde, but haue all things come to passe according to our desire & lyking? Surely, the flesh would neuer be brought to renounce this worlde, which notwithstanding all these verations, is wonderfully in loue with the worlde. The second reason is, that they declare howe there is a ioyfull ende of tribulations, for that by tribulations there is an entrance for vs into the kingdome of God. Which wordes are not so to be vnderstanded, as though by suffering afflictions we deserue the kingdome of God, which is purchased for vs by the bloude of our Sauour Christ only. But they teach vs, that Christ by his example hath trode out this way vnto vs, that as he by the crosse entred into the glozy of his father: so the ende of all afflictions is set forth vnto vs to be the inheritaunce of eternall life, according to the promise of Christ: I will that where I am, there my Minister shall also be. Who therfore will henceforth abhorre the crosse? who will be offended at afflictions, seeing he heareth they come also vnto the wicked, but by Christes meane worke to the saluation of the godly. Let vs remember these things at this day (O brethren.) Let vs consider that it is Gods appoyntment, that we shoulde be thus inbred with diuers troubles, and that it can not be otherwise, bicause the naughtynesse of our flesh so requireth. Let vs haue an eye to the example of Christ, who bicause he woulde be our Captaine, suffered fyrst all these things. Furthermore, let vs fasten the eyes of our minde vpon the glozy of the heavenly life, and forgette these frayle and tempozall things behinde vs. Lette vs ioyne herevnto feruent prayer, that he maye vouchsafe to accomplishe and performe the good worke which is begonne in vs. And so shall it come to passe, that being inspyred with his spirite and grace,

grace, and hauing prosperously ended this race of our life, and attayned to the rewarde of the heauenly, we shall liue and reigne with our Lorde and Sauour Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The.C.Homelie.

AND when they had ordeyned them Elders by election in euery congregation, and had prayed and fasted, they commended them to the Lorde on whome they beleued. And when they had gone thorowout Pisidia, they came to Pamphilia, and when they had preached the woorde in Perga, they descended into the Citie Attalia, and thence departed by shippe to Antioch, from whence they were committed vnto the grace of God, to the woorke which they fulfilled. When they were come and had gathered together the congregation, they rehearsed all that God had done by them, and howe hee had opened the doore offayth vnto the Gentyles. And there they abode long time with the Disciples.



As it was the dutie of the Apostles, to bring our Sauour Iesus Christ Disciples, and to gather him a Church out of all Nations, by preaching of the Gospell: so was it their parts and dutie carefullye and diligently to see vnto the same Churches. And this doe Paule and Barnabas most saythfullye. For after they had with perill of their lyues planted Congregations at Antioche, Iconium, and Lystra, they laboured with all industrie possible to maintaine and defende the same; against the assaults and craftes of Satan. And bicause they knewe the Iewes did marueylously bere them, they returned againe to the Churches there, notwithstanding they were opprobriously driuen forth of them. Neither doe they returne without profyte, but confyrme and strengthen the mindes of the Disciples, with admonitions and comfortes, exhorting them to continue and abide in the doctrine, and putting away the slander and offence of the Crosse, of all which hath bene spoken in the sermon before going. Herevnto is to be adiopned that that is sayde in the beginning of this place, touching Elders ordeyned by the sayde Apostles. When we haue hereof intreated as much as God shall giue vs grace, then will we speake of their returne vnto the Church at Antioch agayne, to whome they recounted all that they had done abrode.

When they had (sayth Luke) ordeyned them Elders by election, in euery congregation, and had prayed and fasted, they commended them to the Lorde on whome they beleued. They are called Seniors or Elders, which partlye are Ministers and teachers of his word, and partly such as are ayding and assisting the Pastours in the administration of the Church, and which by reason of their authoritie see that Discipline be obserued in the Church. And where Luke sayth they ordeyned such in euery Church, it easily appeareth, that it is very necessarye for the conseruation of the Church, to haue such as by whose ministry the doctrine of the worde may be had in continuall vse. This is requisite both for the infyrmitie of the flesh, and also bicause

of

The Apostles appoint Elders in euery church.

Eph. 4:
1. Cor. 12.

The ceremonie
or maner
of the Primitive
Church
in choosing
Elders.

of the corruption of mannes nature, which must needs be oftentimes warned to doe his dutie, least he be brought to destruction by the craftes and subtiltie of the Deuill. For the which cause Christ did not onely sende forth the Apostles to preach the Gospell among all Nations of the worlde: but also gaue vnto his Church, Pastours and teachers, by whose diligence the fayth and knowledg of God which the Apostles taught, might be confirmed and preserued in mens mindes. And Paule writeth that he left Titus for this cause in Creta, that he should ordeyne Elders in euery Citie of that Islande. And here vnto it is manifest the godlyest Kings and Princes that were hertofore had a respect, by whose liberalitie Churches were endowed and enriched, least for want of prouision, the ministry of the word shoulde haue fayled. Therefore their error is very pieuise and absurde, which reiect the doctryne of the worde as vnprofytable and superfluous. For if these men did well knowe themselues, they would perceyue that thys is the readiest waye whereby to attayne vnto saluation, as Christ sometime tolde Martha, being very much busied and occupped in other matters. Therefore as many as will haue the Church to be maintayned, let them diligentely prouide that the Church want not fytt and worthy Ministers.

The Euangelyst also declareth the ceremony or maner of choosing Elders, wherein prayer and fasting were fyrst placed, whereof mention was made (as we haue hearde before) in the lyke case. Act. 1. and. 13. When the Scripture bleseth to ioyne both these together, it signifeth that the Church bled in solemne wyse to come all togyther. For the Primitive Church bled when any great necessitie byged or constrayned them, to appoynt solemne assemblies, giuing themselue to prayer & fasting vntill the euening, wherof we haue euident testimonies in the Prophet Iosel the seconde Chapter, and in the hystories of the Kings. The Primitive Church was moued with weyghty considerations to obserue these thinges in the electing of the Ministers. For where they thought men might easily be deceyued, they would not in such a weyghty case attribute any thing to mannes iudgement, and therefore they thought it mete by godly prayers to seeke the inspiration of Gods spirite. Againe, where they thought it was requisite, to haue menne furnished with singular giftes, for such an office, they besought God of the same also by humble supplication, wherevnto bicause it shoulde be the more feruent, they ioyned fasting, as we haue otherwheres declared. Moreover, Luke maketh mention of laying on of handes, by the which is vnderstanded, not onely consent of voyces, but also imposition of handes, which was a sacrament and token of consecration. And it seemeth y later was the rather obserued. For it is not likely that y Apostles receded from the ceremony which they bled in y choosing of Matthias, or that they permitted any thing to the iudgement of man (as we see cometh to passe in mens voyces) seeing they prouoked all men to prayers and fasting. This religion and holy simplicitie of the Church is worthy to be diligently obserued, wherwith if a man would compare what is done at these dayes in the like case, it shall easily appeare with what tyrannie the Church is oppressed. For through the couetousnesse and ambition of Bishops, it is come to passe, that the libertie of the Church is trode vnder fote, and choosing of Ministers dependeth vpon them, who eyther sell all spirituall liuings for money, or else watche carefully that none be made ministers, but such as are for their owne toth, that

that will cloke and winke at all their doings.

After the choosing of these Ministers, Luke sayth, they commended the congregations to the Lorde, on whome they beleued. This is a dutie of curtesie and humanitie, to commend them to the tuition and defence of God, whose prosperitie and well doing we wishe. It also declareth the diligent care of the Apostles, which alwayes had a speciall consideration of the Churches well fare. Wherevnto that saying of Paule is to be referred: I am combred daylie and doe care for all congregations, who is weake and I am not weake? who is offended and I burne not? In the meane season we are admonished, that by reason of our infirmities we haue neede of Gods protection and gouernance. For, as we be prone and readie to fall, so Satan is still seeking howe to catch vs in his snares, so that when Christ was going out of this worlde vnto his father, he did not without a cause, commende his Disciples vnto the protection of his father. Thys ought to kinde in vs a feruent desyre to true godlynesse and religion, that we betraye not our saluation through our owne slothfulnesse. Again, hereof we may also take comfort, in that it appeareth, our saluation dependeth vpon the protection and prouidence of God. For who would not dispayre, if it should depende vpon mannes wyll and power, which is the most vnconstraine and deceyueable thing in the worlde. Howbeit, there is no cause for vs to dispayre, if we consider howe it standeth in the tuition and gouernance of God, who can not but haue a speciall care of vs, seing he hath such care for the flowers of the fyeelde, and byrdes of the ayre, and hath numbred the very heares of our head. He hath by his sonne promised vs, that he wyll not leaue vs succourlesse. And Christ in whome we beleue professeth he is both a faythfull and valyaunt shepheard, out of whose hande no man is able to take his sheepe. Yea, Paule in an other place teacheth vs, that God knoweth who are his, and howe there is nothing that can seperate vs from the loue of God. Therefore as often as Satan tempteth vs, let vs flye vnto the sanctuarie of Gods mercie and fauour, vnto the which Christ hath commended vs. Moreover, the example of the Apostle teacheth vs, what we should doe after we haue done our dutie. Let vs commit all the successe therof vnto God, by whose prouidence we know all things are gouerned. Thys is the onely meane to moderate and quyet our deuises. Wherein who so are ignorant, are marueylously troubled, and often times leaue off their dutie, supposing to bring matters to passe through their owne wisdom and deuise. For, standing betwene hope and dreade, they can fynde no resting place for their deuise. But they that knowe that trust and diligence is requyred of them, in doing their dutie, and that all successe thereof dependeth vpon God: when they see they haue done their partes and dutie, they can set light all daungers that come vnto them, and no feare of daunger can with hold them from doing their dutie.

Nowe these things being done, Paule and Barnabas appoynt to go a gayne to Antioche in Syria, from whence before they had toke their leaue: And bicause they would not lose their labour by the waye, they preach the Gospell at Perga, a Citie of Pamphilia. This citie was famous by reason of Diana, that was there worshipped, which of the place was called Perga, as the Gentyles write. It was therefore a singuler worke of Gods goodnesse, that he would bouchsafe so superstitious and ydolatrous a people the light

The Apostles commended the congregation vnto the Lorde.

2. Cor. 11.

Iohn. 17.

Iohn. 14.

Iohn. 10.

2. Tim. 2.
Rom. 8.

The Apostles preach the Gospell at Perga.

of his worde. Againe, the diligence of the Apostles is to be considered, and their vnwearysome and great traueyle that they vsed in ouerthrowing the kingdome of Satan. Whosoener will be counted Apostolike, and meane despite of the worlde, and Prince thereof, to rote out superstition, and to set vp the kingdome of Christ, let them imitate this zeale. For they are not to be regarded, which eyther by reason of the ingratitude of the worlde, or of daungers on euery side appearing, leaue of their dueties. But it is time to consider what the Apostles, did after their returne to Antioche.

i. They giue
account of
their doings
abrode.

First, when the congregation was assembled together like faythfull Legates and Ambassadors, they declare vnto the whole Church all that they had done in their circuite. Therefore the Apostles were no Lordes ouer mens faith, prescribing all things of their absolute power, according to their pleasure. But rather they acknowledged themselves to be the seruants of Christ, and did not impudently contempne his spouse, as in these dayes they vse, which swelling in the name and succession of the Apostles, thinke it vnmete to be at others appoyntment, or to render an account of their doings, to anye man. Let them reade I beseeche them, that is written.

i. Pet. 5.

ii. They re-
ferre all their
doings vnto
God.

Moreouer, they vtter and speake nothing of themselves, in arrogant maner, but make God the author of all their doings. And it is not without a cause that Luke maketh mention twise or thrise of the grace & worke of God. For first he sayth, they were committed vnto the grace of God in this worke, to the intent that all the Church might wytnesse, they were able to doe nothing without the grace of God. Then declare they what wonders God wrought by them, which kinde of phrase attributeth the whole successe of their ambassage and ministerie to God onely. Moreouer, they declare howe God opened the doore of fayth vnto the Gentyles. Then is there a doore opened vnto the fayth, when an effectuall operation of the holy spirite is ioyned vnto the outward preaching, whereby the mindes of men are illuminated and drawne vnto the obedience of fayth. This is the only worke of God, as Christ testifieth saying. No man cometh vnto me, except my father draweth him. We are taught therefore, by the example of the Apostles to attribute nothing to our owne industrie and wisedome in dede, of vs it is required to be faithfull and diligent. Howbeit as the successe of our doings must be committed vnto God, so must all the prayse and gloze of their well doings, be referred vnto him also. Which doctrine is not onely for ministers of the worde to remember, but also for all Magistrates, householders, maried folke, seruantes, and to conclude for all states and degrees of men, as we haue oftentimes declared.

Iohn. 6.

iii. They re-
pose them-
selues after
their traueile
and daungers.

Last of all it is sayde, they tarrie a good space, at Antioche, to the ende doubtlesse to recreate themselves with honest and godly quietnesse, hauing bene wearied a long whyle before with many labours and daungers both by lande and sea. For it is mete & conuenient, that they should reape some fruite of their labours, whose fayth and diligence had bene so many waies tried. So Christ bade his Apostles when they returned from preaching the gospel, to go aside out of the waye for a season, and to repose themselves a little. Let no man yet thinke that the Apostles sate still at Antioche idely, gasing vpon others. For without doubt they faithfully taught the brethren, and tooke paines in helping the other Ministers. But for a certaine time, they

Marc. 6.

they surceased from traueyling, and taking anye enterpryse of daunger in hande. God, the father of mercie graunt, that all they that nowe a dayes gloze in the gospel, may fynishe the course of their lyfe, with like diligence and successe as did the Apostles, and that in the heavenly Chanaan, they may enioy perpetuall rest and peace, with Iesus Christ our Sauour, to whome be all praise, honor, power and gloze, for euer. Amen.

The.xv.chapiter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The.Cj.Homely.

AND certayne men which came downe taught the brethren: except you be circumcised after the maner of Moses, you cannot be saued. So when there was ryssen discention and disputing not a little vnto Paule and Barnabas, and certayne other of them, should go vp to Ierusalem vnto the Apostles and Elders about this question. And after they were brought on their way, by the congregation, they passed ouer Phoenices and Samaria, declaring the conuersion of the Gentyles, and they brought great ioy vnto all the brethren. And when they were come to Ierusalem, they were receyued of the congregations and of the Apostles and Elders, and they declared all the things that God had done by them.



In the former part of his treatise or worke, Luke hath declared howe the primitive Church was gathered together, both of Iewes and Gentiles, by preaching of the Apostles, and howe by the wonderfull assistance of GOD, it was preserved amonge the contynuall stormes & blastes of persecution. Hereunto is added a newe hystorie in this Chappiter, that teacheth vs, howe the Lorde preserved the same Church agaynst false brethren and teachers, least it myghte lose eyther simplicitie of doctrine, or puritie of faith.

For hytherto for fourtene yeares together Paule had preached the Gospel, and according to the common consent of the Apostles doctrine had taught, that all saluation was in Christ Iesus onely, which doctrine being everywhere receyued, certayne of the Iewes,

Allij.

specially

The doctrine of the Apostles is oner, by intestine diuision and schisme.

pecially those of the Phariseys secte, that professed the fayth of Christ, began to withstande. Who albeit they confessed Christ, yet they would needes haue circumcision and the ceremonies of the lawes to be ioyned with it, which opinion whyles Paule earnestly resisted, caused great adoe and contention, insomuch that it horribly shooke the whole Church. But our Saviour Christ forsooke not them that strove for the glory of his merite, by whose prouidence it came to passe, that the plaine and simple doctrine of Christ was defended and confirmed; by the publike testimonie of the Apostles, and the whole Church. The consyderation of this hystorie serueth much both to instruct and comfort all congregations. For as by the example of the Apostles, we are taught which waye to resist false doctrine: so learne we that the doctrine of truth standeth firme and sure against all inuasions, wherefore we will in order consider all the partes of this present place.

1. The Autho-
rithis of the
discention.

Roma. 15.

1. Iohn. 2.
Math. 7.
Actes. 20.

1. Cor. 11.

2. The state
of the contro-
uersie of dis-
cention.

Gene. 17.

First, Luke telleth who were the authoys of this strife & discention, even certaine persons that came out of Iurie and from Ierusalem. Therfore they must needes be of great authoritie, considering Ierusalem was the mother Church of all other, and was worthily esteemed of all menne, bicause from thence the Gospell of saluation did first issue and spring: for the which cause Paule also commendeth it, saying: It was meete the Gentyles shoulde minister corporall thinges vnto those of Ierusalem, which had given them the spirituall and eternall giftes of saluation. And it is no doubt, but those deceyuers and seducers did marueylously bragge of the name and authoritie of the Apostles, and did make lyght of Paules name, as who should saye, he deserued not to be counted among the Apostles, bicause he had not bene conuersant with Iesus Christ whyle he liued. For this maye we gather of Paules Epistles, where he is enforced earnestlye to defende his authoritie, and Apostleship against them. Furthermore, we maye here see howe deceyuers braude euen in the Church, but were neuer true members of the Church. For they that are in deede of the Church, vse to continue in the same. Therfore Christ sayth, they go in sheepes clothing. And Paule in another place sayth: from among your felues shall ryse greivous wolues. &c. And this is a wonderfull craft of Satan which knowing that men doe hate and abhorre him, bleseth to counterfeyte an Angell of light, and vnder the cloke of holynesse, to beguyle and deceyue the simple. This place serueth to confute them which constantly beleue that the Romane Church cannot erre, and be deceyued, and affirme that whatsoeuer cometh from thence, ought to be receyued as an Oracle. And yet out of Ierusalem where the Apostles discharged their office and dutie with all diligence, came these hypocrites and deceyuers. What therfore shall we hope for at their handes, amongst whome these many hundred yeres, hath bene seene no token eyther of Apostolike lyfe or doctrine.

Furthermore, the state of the controuersie that these deceyuers helde, is expessed. For they called backe the Gentyles vnto Circumcision, and Ceremonies of the lawe, saying: Except you be circumcised, you cannot bee saued. Which saying it is very like they confirmed with many articles. For they had the lawe of God, who ordeyned Circumcision for a perpetuall signe of his couenant amongst the Israelites. They had also the example of the Church at Ierusalem, where the Apostles yielded so farre to the weak-
nesse,

nesse of the Jewes, that they circumcised their infantes. Moreover, where through Circumcision they were bounde to obserue the lawe (according to that saying of Paule: I testifye to euery man that is circumcised, that hee is bounde to keepe the whole lawe. This being taken awaye, they cryed and sayde that the whole lawe was abrogated, and a gate opened vnto all wickednesse. Yet they confessed Christ notwithstanding, and woulde seme to be followers of the Gospell, like goodlye blenders and compounders, which thought the lawe might be mingled with the Gospell, and the righteousness of workes with fayth. This therefore was the whole state of the controuersie: whether men were iustified through the grace of God, by fayth onely in Christ, or whether the righteousness of the lawe was necessarye vnto saluation. And if a man will weygh and expende this matter well, it shall appeare that this was the very same controuersie, which is betwene vs and the Papistes nowe in these dayes, who professe Christ also, but yet affirme that men are iustified and saued by their merites and good dedes, sauing that in this poynt the Papists case is the weaker and worse, for that they grounde not vppon the lawe of Moses, once giuen by God, but vppon mannes traditions, which long sithence haue bene condemned by the sentence of God. They worship me in vaine teaching the doctrines of men. Therefore it is very necessary for vs to vnderstand this controuersie. For if there be no place due vnto the workes of Gods lawe for vs to glory we be iustified by, then doubtlesse be they very miserable and blinde, which dare challenge this praise vnto the colde obseruances of mannes traditions. In the meane season, mannes peruersenesse bewrayeth itselfe in this place, which where God offreth saluation vnto vs freely, contemneth the same, and seeketh rather a sumptuous and laborious way of attayning therevnto. Examples of this peruersitie appeare in all ages, and the Lorde complayneth hereof in Esay. 55. saying: Wherefore laye you out your money vppon the thing that feedeth not, and spende your labour about the thing that satisfieth you not? Again: My people hath committed two euils: they haue forsaken me the well of the water of life, and digged them pits, yea, vile and broken pits, that can holde no water. And would God that he had not more occasion to make the like complaint euerywhere at this day.

Thirdly followeth the effect of false doctrine, that these Jewish Christians brought in. That was sedition and open schisme, through the which Luke sayth, the Church at Antioch which hitherto had bene moste quiet, and as a common sanctuarie to all the godly, was disturbed. Therefore they that fall from the simple doctrine of the truth, and bring new and false opinions into the Church, these are disturbers of the Church. By this name doth Paule here sette out these fellowes, saying: I marueyle that you are so soone turned from Christ, that called you by grace, vnto another Gospell, which yet is none other, but that there be some which trouble you. And in other places he calleth them Dogges, euill workers, concision, and the very enemies of the crosse of Christ. I know we are charged by the Papistes in these dayes, to haue disturbed & to disturbe the Church. But if the truth of the Apostles doctrine be well marked, it shal appeare we are most clere from this crime, the puritie of which doctrine because we endeouour to restore, maketh vs in dede to disturbe the ydlenesse of them, who vnder a false pretence of Christ & his Church, had a delight to dispozte themselues both with the felles and

flethe

Galat. 5.

Esay. 29.

Math. 15.

Ierem. 2.

3. The successe therof.

Galat. 1.

Philip. 3.

1. Cor. 11.

fleshe of the miserable sheepe. Furthermore, the chiefe vse of this place is, that we be not so offended with the discentions rising in our dayes, by reason of religion, that we therefore thinke all doctrine of fayth and religion, to be doubtfull and vncertayne. For it is euident, that the doctrine of truth, hath in all ages bene diuersly assaulted, and that therefore diuers discentions haue risen by meanes thereof. This God suffereth to come to passe by his iust iudgement, and for the weale of our saluation. For fyrst, according to the saying of Paule, there must needs bee sectes, that they which are perfite, may be knowne. Agayne, by this occasion it commeth to passe, that the chiefe articles of our fayth and saluation are the more diligently and earnestly examined, which vnlesse they were thus called in question, woulde for the most part, lye vnconsidered and buryed. For God can so moderate mischiefes, that they serue vnto the saluation of those that be his, and to those that loue God, all thing worketh to the best. And this may we see in this present controuersie as clere as daye. For hereby came it to passe, that the meane of our iustification was intreated and discusse the more diligently by the Apostles, and that the ceremonies of the lawe were the lesse regarded among the Jewes, wherein yet a great many put much trust. Euen so in our age, the sacrifice of the Masse was no way more ouerthrowne, than by the controuersie which fell out about the supper of the Lorde. Therefore their clamour is pieuishe and absurde, which complaine and saye, that by reason of such discentions, religion is doubtfull and vncertayne. For vnder this colour, they go about to hyde and cloake their prophane and hollowe heartes.

4. Paule
and Barnabas
was slowly
rest.

Galat. 5.

Galat. 3.

Furthermore, let vs consider what Paule and Barnabas and the faithfull of Antioch did in this disceptation. As for Paule and Barnabas, it is sayd that they had much contention and daylie disputation with these disturbers. Therefore they were no dumbe Dogges, which woulde suffer all kindes of doctrine to creepe into the Church, but rather they earnestly withstood these deceyuers, so that the true faith was not ouerturned with their glosses. Yet otherwheres Paule becommeth all things to all men, and earnestly commaundeth those that be strong in faith, paciently to beare with the weaker. Why therefore sheweth he himselfe in this place to be so difficult and vntreatable? Because it was a matter of more importance than coulde be dissembled. For by this opinion, the righteousnesse of fayth which we haue in Christ alone, is ouerturned. For they which by Circumcision, make them selfe bonde vnto the law, to them is Christ become vnprofitable, and they which will be iustified by the lawe, are fallen from grace. Moreover, by this meanes the Christian libertie was in hazarde, which coulde be purchased with none other pryce, than wyth the bloude of Christ, and they which were iustified by the fayth in Christ, and enfranchised with the libertie of the children of God, were not subiect to the commaundement and intollerable yoke of the lawe, as Peter hereafter will declare. Besyde this, the true vse of the lawe was peruerter, which was to bring men, as a tutor and gouernour, vnto Christ. And these fellowes sent those that were grafted in Christ vnto the principles and beginnings of the lawe. Moreover, it coulde not be chosen, but the light of the Gospell shoulde haue bene obscured and darkened with the shadowes of the lawe. Therefore Paule might not in any case haue borne with these deceyuers, vnlesse he woulde haue bene counted an vntrustye

truſtye Miniſter of Chriſt. By the which example we are taught, that we muſt for conſorde and vnities ſake admit nothing, that may any waye obſcure the glory of Chriſt and ſimple confeſſion of the fayth. For that is a very hurtfull conſorde that is redeemed with the prophanation of the name of Chriſt, and denyng of the fayth. For, this ſaying of Chriſt ſtandeth firme and ſtrong: he that loueth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me. Againe: whoſoeuer ſhall bee aſhamed of mee before this adulterous and naughty worlde, him will I be aſhamed of, when I come in the glorye of my father. Furthermore, let vs hereof be perſwaded that Chriſtian menne can haue no peace without Chriſt. For if they will be true Chriſtians, in the world they ſhall haue afflictions, and in Chriſt onely peace.

Howbeit, they of Antioch that belæued, when they perceyued this contention euery day more and more to kindle, they decreed at length with one conſent, that Paule and Barnabas with certaine other Diſciples, ſhoulde go to Ieruſalem, to propounde this queſtion vnto the Apoſtles and Elders, there to be diſcuſſed. And Paule eaſily yeldeth vnto this decree, not meaning to put the cauſe of truth to the iudgement of manne, but for that he well knewe theſe deceyuers abuſed the name of the Apoſtles. Therefore for the more commoditie of the vnlearned and ſimple people, whoſe eyes they had dazeled with the brightneſſe of Apoſtolike authoritie, he eaſily admitted this counſaile, as the moſt commodious and readyeſt waye that coulde be deuised. And this hath bene the chiefe cauſe of all the Synodes and Counſayles that heretofore haue bene gathered by godly Kinges and Biſhops. For it was neuer the minde of thoſe holy men, that the cauſe of fayth and ſaluation ſhoulde be in ſubiectiō to mannes iudgement. But where Heretikes vſed impudently to haunt them of the conſent of Apoſtolike Doctrine, and vniuerſall Church vnto the vnlearned people, the Catholikes thought good moſt commodiouſly to brydle them by Synodes, and the publike teſtimonie of the Church, to theinde that they ſhoulde not afterwarde be belæued. We haue diligently to conſider the modeſtie that Paule here vſeth. For it is manifeſt, he was endued with ſuch conſtancie, that he woulde not haue yelded vnto the Apoſtles, if they woulde haue pronouncēd any thing againſt the truth. For he durſt boldly reſpēde Peter at Antioch, and he teacheth vs that we ought not to belæue an Aungell, if he woulde preach any other Goſpell. Yet he deſpiſeth not a meane and deuise of peace vttered by the godly brethren, whereas he ſawe the glorye of God coulde thereby no way be obſcured, and that the quiete of the weaker ſorte might thereby be procured. This modeſtie muſt be ioyned with conſtancie, leaſt whyle we will ſeeme conſtant, we be founde obſtinate and wayward. For the ſpirit of Chriſt is tractable, and maketh men which vſe him as their counſayler, deſirous of his glory. In the meane ſeaſon their leuitie is not to be allowed, which whyle they will ſeeme tractable and eaſie to be intreated, be obedient to ſuch counſayles, they ſee doe quite deſace and ouerthrow the veritie of fayth, and glorye of Chriſt. Furthermore, this place teacheth vs, which is the beſt waye to calme controuerſies and contentions, that riſe about fayth and religion. Some there be that thinke theſe matters might be taken vp and ended by mannes wiſedome and pollicie, if eche part woulde ſomewhat yelde one to another, as though men might dally in religion, and Gods cauſes, as in other worldly affaires. Why rather doe we

not

Math. 10.

Marc. 8.

Iohn. 16.

The congregation at Antioch referre the controuerſie to the iudgement of the Apoſtles

The cauſe of conuocation: Synodes, and counſayles in the primitive Church.

Galat. 1.2.

Luke. 10.
Iohn. 17.

2. Tim. 3.

Paule and
Barnabas
iourney to
Ierusalem.

not resort vnto the Apostles, to heare what they haue taught and appoynted, whose doctrine is manifestly confirmed with the testimonie of Christ himselfe. For vnto them it is sayd: He that heareth you, heareth me. &c. And we know that Christ prayed for them which should beleue in him, according to their preaching. Moreover, they were openly endued with y^e holy spirit, which shewed manifest arguments of his presence and operation in them. Wherefore we must earnestly take hede that we swarue not one nayles breadth, from their doctrine. The Apostle Iohn teacheth vs the same, where in his fyft Epistle and seconde Chapter, he sayeth: Lette that remayne in you which you hearde from the beginning. If that which you hearde from the beginning shall remaine in you, you also shall continue in the father and in the sonne. Paule also where he aduertiseth vs of such as presume to peruert the truth, sayth: But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, which also were committed vnto thee, knowing of whome thou hast learned them, and forasmuch as thou hast of a child, knowne the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee learned vnto saluation, through the fayth which is in Christ Iesu. Therefore they are sowlye deceyued, which by this example will obtrude vnto vs Counsayles, as though religion ought by them to be ruled, where it is euident these many yeres they haue bene such, as haue had no signe or token of any Apostolike spirite in them. And if they woulde heare the Prophetes and Apostles, we woulde according to the example of Paule and Barnabas, willingly go by with them vnto the Apostles, to heare what the spirite of God speaketh in them. But if they will harken vnto men, farewell they, seeing we haue none other maister to harken vnto, but Iesus Christ.

But Luke also describeth Paules going to Ierusalem, bicause there be diuers things therein worthy to be considered. Amongst which, the fyft is, howe Paule and Barnabas are brought on their waye by the congregation, which appointed them worthy and faythfull companions to iourney with them. Whereby it appeareth the congregation toke their part, and had no suspicion in their doctrine and beleefe. Let all congregations follow this ensample, that they leaue not the faythfull ministers of Christ destitute of helpe. For what else doe they but susteyne open warre in the Churches quarrell and behoufe: And surely their ingratitude is execrable, which proude to stande out of Sunneshot, when troubles arise about religion, and will stande ydely gasing on, as though the matter pertayned nothing vnto them, but onely vnto the Ministers. Then also to the ende their iourney should not be vnpofytable, and all the time of their voyage lost, they preach euerywhere the conuersion of the Gentyles. And this was the chiefe cause of the contention, bicause many toke it in euill parte, that the vncircumcised Gentyles were receyued into the felowship of Christ and his Church. But the godly men vnderstode, that the workes of God which serued to the setting forth of Christes glorie, must not be dissembled, bicause some men had a wrong iudgement of them. Nay we must rather wrestle against the waywardnesse of the worlde, least thereby Gods glorie might be impayred. For that that Christ sometime sayde vnto the priestes, being offended with the childrens shewing: If these holde their peace, the stones shall crye: the same let vs thinke spoken euen to vs. For although we proude for our slouthfulnesse, dare doe nothing for the glorie of God: yet will

God

God easily fynde faythfull defenders of the same, and we shall be made the vessels of wrath & ignominie, which would not be the instruments of grace and glorie. Thirdly, the brethren reioyce in the conuersion of the Gentiles, and neyther enuie them the fellowship of saluation, neyther Paule nor Barnabas the singuler commendation of such a Ministerie. This is the properie of the godly, that they reioyce at the setting forth of Christes glorie, and the saluation of others. Fourthly, when they were come to Ierusalem, they were receyued by the Apostles, and the whole congregation, as singuler instrumentes of Christ. For it becommeth vs to reuerence the giftes of God in them, whose ministry God bleth both to our profyte and his praise. They agayne declare what God had done by them, bicause the same made much for their purpose, the aduersaries going about, through their pœuill opinion to ouerthrowe the vocation of the Gentyles. God graunt that in these dayes also, contentions being calmed and layde downe, we maye all giue eare to the Apostles doctrine, and that all heartes through the vnitie of fayth, and bonde of true loue, may strongly be knyt togyther, in Iesus Christ our onely sauour, to whome be all prayse, honoz, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The. Cij. Homelie.

THE N rose vp certayne of the sect of the Phariseys, which did beleene, saying, that it was needefull to circumcise them, and to commaunde them to keepe the lawe of Moses. And the Apostles and Elders came togyther to reason of this matter. And when there was much disputing, Peter rose vp, and sayde vnto them: yee men and brethren, you knowe howe that a good whyle ago, God did choose amonge vs, that the Gentyles by my mouth should heare the worde of the gospell and beleue. And Cod which knoweth the hartes, bare them witnesse, and gaue vnto them the holy ghost, euen as he did vnto vs, and put no difference betweene vs and them, seeing that with fayth he purified their hartes. Nowe therefore, why tempt you God, to put on the disciples neckes that yoke, which neyther our fathers nor wee were able to beare. But we beleue that through the grare of the Lorde Iesus Christ, we shall be saued as they doe. Then all the multitude was appeased, and gaue audience to Barnabas and Paule, who told what signes and wonders God had shewed among the Gentyles by them.



After the doctrine of the Gospell was spreade by the ministerie of Paule & Barnabas among the gentiles, and that they were taken into the communion of Christ and his Church, a grieuous contention fell out among those of the fayth, bicause dyuers saide the Gentiles ought to be circumcised, and to be inforced to obserue the lawe of Moses, which thing others agayne dyd constauntly denie. Luke by the instinct of the holy ghost describeth this controuersie verie dyligently, bicause it serueth much for the instruction of all men. For it teacheth vs, we must not take it for anye insolent or straunge thing, though nowe a dayes also some controuersies rise among the profes-

soars of one fayth and doctrine, for as much as God suffereth not such controuersies to come to passe, without some vtilitie and auayle to all men. Agayne he sheweth vs what we haue to doe in such a case. For we must according to the ensample of Paule and Barnabas, stoutely defende the truth against all men, and not harken to the iudgements of any men, but aske counsell of the Apostles of Jesus Christ, whome he hath appoynted for to be the teachers of his worde.

The contro-
uerse of ius-
tification
before the
Apostles.

But Luke holding on in the hystorie begonne, sayth that a greater contention fell out hereabout, after that the matter was proposed vnto the Apostles and Elders at Ierusalem. The Authours hereof were those of the Phariseys that beleued in Christ, yet retayning this smatche of olde lea-uen, that they strengthly bged the fulfylling of the righteousnesse of the lawe. For it appeareth by the storie of the gossell, that the Phariseys set all iustification in the outward exercise of the workes of the lawe. Wherefore it could not be chosen, but that they should be the more obstinate in keeping the same. Whereof we haue example in the Monkes at this day, whome it is an harde matter to drawe from their olde secte, but some tokens there- of will still remayne. It is woorthy diligently to be obserued, how the chiefe article of christian religion was canuassed through this contention, in the hearing of the godlye before the Apostles, so that whether parte helde the truest opinion, coulde at the first not be perceyued. Hereby we are taught, that we must not marueyle, although the excellentest heades and wyttes in the worlde be sometime deceyued, or else stiffely stande in defence of recey- ued errours. For by this meane God sheweth vs howe to marke the cor- ruption of our nature, that we being humbled by the consideration thereof, should not stande so much in our owne conceyte. Nowbeit, Peter vntill this tyme helde his peace in all this contention, to the ende he woulde not seeme arrogant in prescribing of others, and bicause it was expedient that euery man should saye his minde. But when he perceyued that the contenders minds waxed hotter and hotter, he standeth by both modestly and grauely by his authoritie, to moderate the matter, and plainly defendeth the opi- on of Paule and Barnabas, who taught that the meane of mans saluation, consisted in the onely fayth of Jesus Christ, and that the obseruation of the ceremonials needed not: yea, that no praise and glozy of iustification was to be ascribed vnto the lawe. All his saying dependeth vpon two poyntes, whereof the one sheweth that God appointeth none other waye of saluati- on to be obserued, than that which is prescribed in the gossell, namely the fayth in Jesus Christ. The other declareth how it is a verie heynous mat- ter, for anye man to affirme that the fulfylling of the lawe is necessarie to saluation. But of eche of them, we shall by order intreate.

Peters iudge-
ment concer-
ning iustifi-
cation.

God iustify-
eth of fauour
or grace
through fayth
in Christ.

The first poynt is taken out of the example of God, which iustified the first frutes of the beleuing Gentiles, none otherwise than by fayth in Jesus Christ. This place must be vnderstanded as concerning the hystory of Cornelius the Centurion, which Peter alleageth to verie good purpose, bicause the same before had bene called in question and argued on among the faythfull, as we sawe in the eleuenth Chapter. The summe of his ar- gument is this: God when he called and adopted Cornelius and his family, from gentilitie vnto Christ, and into the societie of his Church, did by that example set forth vnto vs, a true and perfyte meane and way of attayning

vnto

unto saluation. But he requyred nothing else of them, but to heare the gospel of me, and to beleue it. Ergo, these two thinges are sufficient for man to be iustified by, and to attaine vnto saluation, that is to say, to heare the gospel, and by true fayth to embrace Christ preached in the same. And Peter gathereth most strongly, of perticulers, an vniuersall doctrine, because God bleth one certaine and inuiolable rule, in sauing of all men. And it is not lyke that God would neglect that rule in sauing a prophane souldyours, that was confirmed in the bloude of his sonne. But that his argument might beare the more weight, he calleth them for wytnesses of the same thing: you know (sayth he) how that a good whyle ago (that is in the beginning of the Church) God dyd choose or appoint amongst vs, that the Gentyles by my mouth should heare the worde of the gospel, and beleue. Upon the which wordes, he might haue inferred: why then doe you requyre circumcision and fulfilling of the law, ouer and beside those thinges that seeme to God sufficient. Or whence haue you authoritie to alter the order appointed of God, and to be so bolde as to adde or take anye thing from the same. But he leaueth all this to them to gather. Yet he ioyneth two thinges more hereto, whereby he openeth this example. Fyrst God (sayth he) which knoweth the hartes, and is not deceyued with any outwarde appearance, hath abundantly proued this waye, that I haue nowe tolde you, to be sufficient euen by his owne testimonie. For as soone as men beleued the gospel that was preached, he sent vnto them the holy ghost, as well as vnto vs. Which spirite since this world and prophane men euen by Christs owne testimonie can not receyue, it appeareth most evidently that God acknowledged these men, for the members of his Church, and for coinheritors with Christ, although they were neyther circumcised, nor had receyued any other ceremonie of the lawe. Then pointing, as it were with hys synger to the maner of iustification: and God (sayth he) put no difference betweene them and vs, seing that with fayth he purifyed their hartes. Before this in daede, the Jewes were deuided from the Gentiles by the lawe, but Christ hath broken downe the particion of the lawe, and of two people hath made one Church, and hath purifyed the Gentiles, as well as the Jewes, by fayth. Hereto appertayneth that place of Paule. And the wordes which he wyrteth to the Romanes. cap. 3. We holde therefore, that a man is iustified by fayth, without the workes of the lawe. Is he the God of the Iewes onely? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? yes, euen of the Gentiles also, for it is God onely that iustifyeth the circumcision that is of fayth, and vncircumcision thorow fayth.

Furthermore, Peter in one brieue sentence comprehendeth whatsoeuer may be sayde of our iustification. Fyrst he confesseth that our hartes haue neede to be purifyed. And therefore must needes be a thing altogether polluted, because the hart is the fountaine out of which spring all our doings. God himselfe beareth wytnesse hereof, where he sayth, the inuentions and deuises of man are naught euen from his childhood. And this one thing is abundantly sufficient, to ouerthrowe all the righteousnesse of our workes, as oftentimes we haue declared. Then teacheth he howe purifycation is wrought by fayth, because it taketh holde of Christ, whome God hath ordeyned to be our iustifyer. He cleanseth vs from our sinnes, through the merite of his bloude. He communicateth vnto vs his righteousnesse, so that by

A m m m. ij.

reason

Ehesi. 2.
Roma. 3.The waye
how we are
iustified.

Gene. 8.

I. Iohn. 1.

1. Cor. 1.
2. Cor. 5.

Iohn. 15.

Ephes. 2.
Iohn. 6.

Psal. 51.

Rom. 8.

Math. 9.

To attribute
righteousnes
to the workes
of the lawe, is
an heynous
offence.

Psal. 78.
Num. 11.

reason of fayth, whereby we be grafte in him, we are taken for righteous, in the sight of God. Wherefore Paule declareth that he is made our righteousness of God: Againe, besides this, he onely mortifyeth the reliques and dregges of our fleshe, whyles he chaungeth and regenerateth vs by his worde and spirite, gyuing vs power to bring forth frutes aunswerable to our profession: Wherunto these words of his are to be referred: Now are you cleane, thorow the words which I haue spoken to you. He that abyedeth in me & I in him, bringeth forth much fruit. But bicause we can haue no fellowship with Christ, but through fayth, the scripture truly affirmeth, that we be purifyed & iustified by fayth: which phrase of speach must not so be taken, as though faith were a vertue, through y^e merite wherof men were clenfed fro their sinnes, but bicause we therby take hold of Christ, in who all our righteousness consisteth. Thirdly, he maketh God y^e author of this purification. Therefore he is y^e only author of our faith, which Paule also testifieth to be y^e gift of god. And Christ sayth, none cometh vnto him, but whom the father draweth. For where the naturall man perceyueth not the mysteries of the spirite, & we of our selues are not able once to thinke well, we must nedes be illuminated and drawne of God, that fayth may take place in vs. So all the glory of our iustification must retorne vnto God, and nothing must be lefte, to mans power or merite. This sawe Dauid long ago, when he called vpon God to be forgiven of his sinnes, saying: Washe me thoroughly from my wickednesse, and cleanse me from my sinne. Purge me with Ilope, and I shal be cleane, washe me and I shall be whyter than snowe. Delyuer me from bloud-guyltinesse o God, thou that art the God of my saluation. And hereby maye we receyue great comfort to strengthen our faith in temptations. For where our iustification and saluation dependeth vpon God, it must nedes be certaine and infallible. Hereof procede those sayings of Paule: who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods chosen? It is God that iustifieth, who is it that can condemne. Such was the certaintie of this doctrine among the people of God in all ages, that the Phariseys also could plainly confesse, that God onely had power to forgive sinnes. Therefore we doe not without cause nowe a dayes bewaile the folly and pryde of those men, which attribute this glorie eyther to their owne workes, or else to most arrogant and impudent hypocrites. Howe grievously these men offende, Peter sheweth in the second part of his oration, which now we shal consider.

No we therefore (sayth he) why tempt you God, to put vpon the Disciples neckes that yoke which neyther our fathers nor we were able to beare? He teacheth by these weightye wordes, that all our saluation is ouerthrowne, and that such intollerable yoke cannot be layde vpon the Disciples neckes without a marueylous offence, if they be drinen to seeke saluation by obseruing the lawe. And with this opinion or doctrine he sayth God is tempted. For they tempt him, that without his commaundement, eyther go about themselues, or exact of others to doe that that is not in their power. And they also which will be taught the will of God, by anye other meanes than he hath appointed. So the Israelites tempted God, when after his infinite benefytes, they sayde they would acknowledge his goodnesse and omnipotencie, if he coule giue them fleshe to eate in the wildernesse. And Christ shoulde haue tempted God, if he had followed the devils counsaile, to haue cast himselfe downe headlong from the pinnacle of the Temple, to haue

haue proued the will and truth of Gods promises toward him. Both these thinges it is manifest they doe, that will be iustified by the workes of the lawe. For those things which farre passe the strength of man, without any calling of God or his worde, both they themselues enterprise to doe, and also exact of other. For it is as impossible for any man to fulfill the law, as to reach heauen with his synger. For the lawe is spirituall, and requyrez not onely our outward workes, but also all our minde, and all the powers of man to obey God. But we be carnall and solde vnder sinne. And euen in the Saints remaine the dregs of flesh, and the law of sinne, which bringeth vs in thral to sinne, euen against our will, and against the spirit of God, as Paule confesseth of himselfe in the chapter last rehearsed. Moreover, the law threatneth the sentence of malediction and death vnto as many as fulfill not all the commaundements therof. What else then doe they, but tempt God, which will be iustified by the lawe: And bicause they neglect the meane of saluation, which God offereth them in Christ, and deuyle a newe meane to attayne vnto the grace of God, they tempt him two wayes. And if they will enforce other men also vnto the same way, they lay such a yoke vpon them, as y^e holy fathers in time past were not able to beare. For thus vsed they to saye: If thou Lord wilt marke narrowly what is done amisse, who shall be able to abyde it: Enter not into iudgement with thy seruant. All our righteousnesse is like a patched garment, and like a cloth arayed with a womans monethly disease. Marke therefore what iust occasion we haue to contende with these men, which now a dayes woulde haue people iustified by their workes, and which like the Phariseys contemning the righteousnesse of God, which he giueth vs in Christ, go about to set by their owne. And let no man here replye, Ergo, the lawe is giuen vs in vaine. Ergo, we will boldly doe what we list. For the true vse of the lawe remaineth still in that like a Tutor it leadeth vs vnto Christ, and sheweth vs a rule howe to liue godly. Neither must we renounce good workes, although we attribute not the glory of iustification vnto them. For although iustification belongeth only vnto God, yet is it euident, that the dutie of them, whome God iustifyeth, is continually to keepe innocencie and puritie of lyfe, which is giuen them in Christ, as much as in them is, touching which poynt Paule hath diuers considerations. What can be spoken more grieuously than that, y^e Peter sayth agaynst them which woulde seeme to strue for the glory of God, for good works, and the duties of a Christian lyfe: He sayeth they tempt God, which is such an heynous offence by Scripture, as is worthe of no pardon. They put a yoke vpon other mennes neckes, and bring them into thraldome againe that are redeemed with the bloude of Christ. Therefore they commit sacrilege against Christ. If our aduersaries now a dayes woulde expende these things, they shoulde easily perceyue, that they had no cause to rayle and fare so foule with vs, but woulde rather acknowledge their fault, and not treade vnder foote the grace of God, and the merite of Christ with their fylthie hypocrisie, so waywardly as they doe.

Furthermore, least Peter might seeme ouerboldye to condemne the fathers, in saying that they were able to fulfill the lawe, in his conclusion he bringeth in the meane whereby they were saued, saying: wee belecue that through the grace of our Lorde Iesus Christ, we shall be saued, as they doe beleue. Thus he encourageth the weake, to whome it seemed an harde mat-

ter

Rom. 7.

Deut. 27.

Psa. 130. 143

Esay. 64.

The vse of
the lawe.

Rom. 6.

The faith of
the fathers of
the olde Te-
stament, and
the newe is
but one.

Iohn. 8.

1. Cor. 10.

Math. 3. 17.

A President
of a counsell,
assembled in
the holy ghost

ter to forsake that religion wherein they belæued, their forefathers pleased God and were saued, as though he shoulde say: you are fowle deceyued, if you thinke our Predecessors were iustified and saued by the workes of the lawe, seeing they haue plainly confessed they neuer fulfilled the lawe. And if you woulde then knowe which waye they were saued, we can shewe you none other than the same, which is at this day preached to vs in Christ. For he whome we knowe is come, they wayted for to come, and hoped in none other Saviour but him. Therefore there is but one maner of sayth, both of the olde and new Testament, and but one way of saluation in them both. Christ testifieth the same, speaking of Abraham, where he sayth that Abraham saue his daye, and reioyced therein. And Paule sayeth that the fathers did eate the same spirituall meate that we do eate, and confesseth that they drew saluation out of the rocke which was Christ. And to conclude, he maketh such a communion betwene vs and the fathers, that one while he applieth their sacraments vnto vs, and an otherwhile ours vnto them. They are therefore greatly deceyued, that saye the olde Testament belongeth not vnto vs, and saye we be no Jewes, for whose behoufe they were writen. Why rather doe not we thinke the Jewes were the people of God, whome God saued none other waye in times passed, than we be saued now adayes? Againe, Peter briefly toucheth the meane of our saluation. And the foundation thereof he layeth in the grace of God, by the which worde alone, the righteousnesse and merite of workes is excluded, bicause they be contrary one to the other. For if saluation come of grace (as Paule sayth) then not of workes, for then grace shoulde not be grace, if workes shoulde merite. But if we be saued by workes, then it is not by grace, for the worke loseth the name of merite, as soone as grace entreth. See Romaines the. xi. Chap. Which place abundantly teacheth vs, that the grace of God, and the merites of our workes cannot stande together. Then againe he sayth, that Jesus Christ is the mediator of that grace, in whome we are taught by Oracle from heauen, that God is reconciled vnto vs. Last of all he sayth, we take holde of this grace by faith. For we belæue (sayeth he) to be saued by the grace of our Lorde Jesus Christ. Therefore all the meane of our saluation may be comprehended in fewe and plaine wordes, if we saye we be saued by sayth, through the grace of God in Jesus Christ, which is the summe of all the doctrine, as well of the Prophetes as the Apostles.

Nowe after Peter had ended his saying, all the multitude were appeased, and with silence testified their consent. By this maye be gathered, as by a most euident argument, that they were gathered together in the holy ghost. For as he is the spirite of truth, so whosoever he breatheth on, cannot chioise but pæelde vnto the truth. And we must neuer belæue that those Counsailes are gouerned by his guiding, where mennes eares are stopped by from hearing the truth, and vse all libertie of speach against y same, such as we see the Bishoppes of Rome now many hundreth yeares haue summoned and kept. For as in them they haue ratified opinions cleane false and vngodly: so no man coulde without manifest daunger of his life speake against their decræes. Whobeit, Paule and Barnabas take occasion of Peters wordes, to declare what myracles and wonders God wrought amongst the Gentyles for the confirmation of their ministerie, that hereby it might the more euidently appeare how God made no difference betwene the

the Jewes and the Gentyles, seeing he would haue such myracles wrought amongst the Gentyles, as vsed to be shewed among the Jewes. Thus we see the ende of all myracles is, to confyrme the Apostles doctrine, whereof we haue oftentimes spoken heretofore. It shall be our duties with attent minde and fyrmeyth to embrace that way of saluation that Peter hath declared. For so shall it come to passe, that we also being purifyed and made cleane through grace, shall attaine to the inheritance of heauen with Christ our Lorde: to whome be prayse, honoꝝ, power, and gloꝝy, for euer. Amen.

The. Ciiij. Homelie.

AND when they helde their peace, James answered, saying: Men and brethren, harcken vnto me. Simeon tolde howe God at the beginning did visite the Gentyles, to receyue of them a people in his name. And to this agree the wordes of the Prophete, as it is written. After this, I will returne and will builde agayne the Tabernacle of Dauid, which is fallen downe, and that which is fallen in decaye of it, will I builde agayne, and I will set it vp, that the residue of men may seeke after the Lorde, and also the Gentyles, vppon whome my name is named, sayeth the Lorde, which doth all these thinges. Knowne vnto God are all his workes from the beginninge of the worlde. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentyles are turned vnto God: but that we wryte vnto them, that they abstaine themselves from fylthinesse of Images, and from fornication, and from strangled and from bloude. For Moses of olde time hath in euery Citie them that preach him in the Synagoges when he is read euery Sabboth daye.



The Euangelist Luke hath very diligently described the controuersie that came to passe in the primitive Church, about the matter of iustification. In this description we haue seene what Peters iudgement was, who hath taught vs that faith onely was sufficient to iustify the Gentiles, and that they were not to be burthened with the yoke of the law. And because many menne were moued with the example of the fathers, supposing they were iustified by the law: he answereth this obiection, shewing that they coulde be iustified none other waye, than by the grace of God, the authoꝝ and mediator whereof, is our Sauour Jesus Christ. But because we haue intreated hereof in the Sermon that is gone before, let vs now see what James the Apostle the sonne of Alpheus, of whom Paule speaketh, 2. Galat. sayth, whose wordes consist of two members or partes. For first he subscribeth vnto Peter, and then he declareth his counsell, howe a peace and true conoord might be made and conserued betwene the Jewes and Gentyles.

But before we come vnto James wordes, we must marke howe he beganne not to speake, afoze he saue other holde their peace. For hereof a man may gather the order of the Apostles Counsaile, howe they did all things with modestie, and howe there was none of them that would prescribe another. An example of the like we saue also before. For while diuers did egerly contende, Peter helde his peace. But when he saue time serued,

*The order of
the Apostles
Counsailes.*

ued, he arose bp both with modestie and grauitie, and beganne to speake his iudgement, and was hearde of others with like patience, as he not long before had hearde others. After he had done, Paule and Barnabas were hearde without interruption of any bodie, who confyrm'd Peters sentence by an argument taken of myracles. And when these also had spoken their minde, James steppeth forth, and almost is the last manne that speaketh, although he was accounted among the pillars of the Church. This modestie was an euident signe of the holy ghoſt, which gouerned their mindes, that by ouer great heate of contention, there shoulde rise no vncomeſlye tumulte or trouble, and that men shoulde not stoppe their eares against the truth. This order ought to be obserued in all publike actes and assayes, so that no man shoulde be so ready to speake, as to heare what other shall say. For as that kynde of men is fowlish, who for that they onely woulde seme wyse, thinke it meete for them onely to speake, and suppose they haue great iniurie done vnto them, if any man dissent neuer so little from them, so are they also vnprofytable and pernicious.

1. James subscribeth vnto Peters iudgement.

The Prophetes are agreeable with the Apostles.

The place of Amoz the ix. Chap.

But let we these things passe, and hearken vnto James, which in the beginning of his Oration, yeldeth vnto the iudgement of Peter, saying: Simeon tolde howe God at the beginning did visite the Gentyles, to receyue of them a people in his name. James acknowledgeth here Gods counsaile and purpose, which by the calling of Cornelius did abundantly declare, that the Gentyles had neede of none other preparation to be iustified and saued, than of faith in Christ, and therefore he plainly subscribeth vnto Peters opinion. And least the Apostles only might seme to be of this opinion, he proueth the same by the vniforme consent of the Prophetes, although he bring but one testimony out of them. Neither was it needefull to bring any more, forasmuch as all the Prophetes were inspyred with one and the selfe same spirite, and agreed in the declaration of mannes saluation. It is worthy to be diligently marked, howe the Apostles of their mere authoritie obtrude and charge the Church with nothing, but by scripture proue all the things that they teach. For they acknowledged themselves to be the seruantes of Christ and his Church, and therefore they thought they ought to establishe nothing that was repugnant to the will of Christ and the holy Scripture. Which modestie if they had obserued, which woulde be taken and called their successors, we shoulde at this day haue lesse superstition in the Church, and more godlynesse, and sincere religion.

Concerning the oracle of the Prophet, it is in the ix. chapter of Amoz. He had before prophcyed destruction vnto the Jewes, which they had deserved bicause of their vnruly and licentious luyng. But bicause by destruction of the Jewes, the promises of the eternall kingdome of the Mefsias might seme to quayle and fall, God comforteth them agayne, promysing, that he will restore the tabernacle or kingdome of Dauid agayne. I will returne (sayth he) and will buylde agayne the Tabernacle of Dauid that is fallen downe, and that which is fallen in decay of it, will I set vp agayne. And it is not without a cause that he maketh mention of the Tabernacle. For so he comprehendeth the outward worship, which must be abrogated and abolished in the kingdome of the Mefsias. And therefore it seemeth that James maketh his argument, that the Gentyles shoulde not be striven withall about ceremonies and obseruation of the lawe, for as much as it was long time before

fore prophesied, that all Moses discipline should cease in the time of the Messias. Also here is declared what manner of people should be in the church vnder Christ: And among these, the first place is giuen to the remnant of the Jewes, even vnto those which were saved by the peculiar goodnesse of God, from the vniuersall destruction of all the nations, according to that saying of Esay, the tenth Chapter. Though the people of Israel be as the sande of the sea, yet shall the remnant of them be saved. But vnto these shall come all other nations, which shall be called after the name of God, and shall seeke the Lorde with the Jewes. In these words lye two arguments. First, it is sayde that in the kingdome of Messias, the Jewes and Gentiles shall be, one as worthy as an other. And next they shall haue both one office and duetie. This shall be their dignitie or worthynesse, that the name of God shall be imputed ouer them all: that is as much to say, they shall both be called after the name of God, and the people of God. For this is a phrase of speche much vled with the Hebrewes, which is to be founde in Gene. 48. and Esay. 4. The duetie of both this people shall be to seeke the Lorde. Which thing is not done with outwarde ceremonies and obseruances of the lawe, but by true fayth. Of these wordes of the Prophete, Iames most strongly concludeth, that it is a folly and vniuersite for the ceremonies of the lawes sake, to bereaue the Gentyles of that glorie, which God long sithence boughsed to giue them. Moreover, as it is a singuler comfort, that through the falshood and destruction of man, Gods promises can nothing be stopped or hindered: (for what though some of them beleued not? Shall their vnbeliefe make the promise of God of no effect? Nay, let God be true, and euery man a lyer) so whosoever will be taken for the people of God, are in this place admonished of their duetie. That is to seeke the Lorde, who being a spirite insynite, and peering through all thing, and governing all thing, is not tyed to anye certaine place, but maye be sought and founde by fayth onely, which taketh holde of him. Whyle he manifesteth himselfe vnto vs, by his worde. And least it might seme an absurde and straunge thing to any man, that the Gentyles should thus suddenly be matched with the Jewes, Amoz maketh God the Authoz hereof, and Iames expounding the same sayth. Knowne vnto God are all hys workes from the beginning. As though he should say. There is no cause why eyther we should marueyle at these things, or accuse God of vniuersite. For although these seme vnto vs to be absurde thinges, yet God knoweth certainly the reason of all his doings. Neyther let vs thinke that God can be deceyued, because long ago, before this worlde was created, he disposed and ordered all things well, by his eternall counsell. Hereof may be gathered a generall doctrine, that we must not call the eternall purpose of our saluation, to mans account, but reuerently kisse and order the righteousness, wisdom, and goodnesse of God. See Paule touching thys poynt. Rom. 9. and. 11. Chapters.

In the seconde part of his oration, Iames offereth a counsell both profitable and necessarie. He sawe great enmitie betwene the Jewes and the Gentyles, whereof at length was lyke to growe a pernicious & dangerous schisme in the Church. Wherefore necessitie required, that deliberation should be taken with speede, for the procuring and mainteyning of concord, and sheweth what is best to be done. The summe of all his aduise is,

Ann. i.

that

Rom. 9. 11.

2. I demyle
how to make
an vntie and
concorde be-
twene the
Jewes and
the Gentyles

that the libertie of the Christians must be kept safe and inuolable, and that it must be so tempered, that it breake not out into lycentiousnesse, and giue occasion of offence. Unto the fyrst poynt belongeth this saying of his: wherefore my sentence is, that wee trouble not them, which from the Gentiles are turned vnto God. The meaning is, that the yoke of the lawe must not be layde vpon them, nor their consciences charged with the obseruing therof, as a thing necessarie vnto iustification for them which had forsaken the superstitiousnesse of gentilitie, and professed Christ. And that the Gentiles should not thinke the law so abrogated, as though men were at libertie to doe what they list, he thinketh good to admonishe them touching certaine pointes, wherein the Gentiles offended, both against christian puritie and holynesse, and also against brotherly loue. foure things he forbiddeth, whereof two are of themselves vnlawfull, and other two are meane and indifferent things.

Fylthynesse
of Images
and fornication.

Of the fyrst sort are filthynesse of Images and fornication. And hereof were the Gentyles to be admonished, bicause they folwly offended in them both. For there were of them, who after they had professed Christ, yet went into the ydols temples, and being inuited and bidden of their friends, were present at the Gentiles sacrifices, eate of such things as were offered vnto the ydols, and to be bryefe, were partakers at these sacrifices, as easily appeareth by the fyrst Epistle of Paule to the Corinthians. And they thought they offended not in thus doing, bicause they knewe the ydole was nothing, and were well instructed concerning the fayth. But Iames in one worde preuenteth and aunswereth their reasons, while he aduiseeth them to abstayne from filthynesse of Images. For hereby he teacheth vs, that ydolatrie is vnlawfull and abhominable of it selfe, so that no man can be partaker thereof, without manifest pollution and vncleanesse. This saying it seemeth he toke out of the lawe, where God saith by Moses. The grauen ymages of their Gods shalt thou burne with fyre, and couet not the Golde and Syluer that is on them, nor take it vnto thee, least thou be snared therein. For it is an abomination before the Lorde thy God. Bring not therefore abomination into thine house, least thou be a damned thing as it is: but vtterly defie it, and abhorre it, for it is a damned thing. As touching fornication, what licentiousnesse the Gentiles therein vsed without all check or punishment is more knowne than deserueth to be declared. There are euerywhere extant in hystories and Poetes wytyngs, the examples of fylthie lust, the Poets seeking great commendation of wytte, by describing such venerious actes and persons. Therefore it was needefull to admonishe the Gentyles diligently of both these things. Hereof ought to be gathered a generall and perpetuall precept, howe it is the duetie of christian people, to keepe themselves in all things cleane and vnspeckled vnto God. Neyther must they be partakers of straunge sacrifices, for as much as God requyrez the whole heart and minde of man. And that saying of Paule is well knowne: you can not be partakers of the Lordes tables, and of the table of deuilles. Agayne, as touching our conuersation of lyfe, it behoueth vs also to consecrate the same vnto God. For it is euident, that our bodys through the bloude of Christ, are dedicated to be temples of the holpe ghost. Therefore God must be glorified in our bodys. Wherefore fylthie and abhominable is the error of them, which say whoredome is lawfull and fræ for christian men, whereas

Deut. 7.

Deut. 6.

1. Cor. 10.

1. Cor. 6.

whereas Paule would not once haue it named among christians, and threateneth the horrible vengeance of God, not onely vnto adulterers, but also vnto whozemongers.

In the second sort are numbred, strangled meates and bloude, from which he would haue the Gentyles also absteyne. For although thys precept be numbred among the ceremonies, which are plainly abolished in Christ: yet bicause there was an olde lawe concerning the same, appointed by God vnto all the worlde after the floude, and thys was a thing daylie vsed among men, they of the weaker sorte among the Jewes, coulde not but be greatly offended, seing the Gentiles eate of all those things without any difference. Therefore Iames thinketh it mete, that the Gentyles in this behalfe should refraine their lybertie, and for charities sake, absteyne from those things which of themselves were lawfull, and graunted by God, yet by vsing them inconsiderately and vnwarily, might be offence vnto others. And that this was the Apostles meaning, appeareth by the wordes of Paule. I know and am fully certified by the Lorde Iesus, that there is nothing common of it selfe, but vnto him that iudgeth it to be common, to him it is common. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meate, now walkest thou not charitably: destroy not him with thy meate, for whome Christ dyed. Cause not your treasure or commoditie to be euill spoken of, for the kingdome of God is not meate and drinke, but righteousness and peace, and ioye in the holye ghost. &c. He sayth also, that he would neuer eate fleshe, rather than offende any man. Therefore this place maketh not for them, which thinke they may lawfully prescribe fasting dayes, and such lyke, by the authoritie of the Apostles, commaunding to absteyne from strangled and bloude. For they reason is not all one, bicause they bryng mans traditions onely, which are of no authoritie in religion, and laye snares for mennes consciences, which the Apostles thought by all meanes, to be auoyded. But hereto also appertayneth the reason that Iames bryngeth. Moses (sayth he) hath of olde time in euery Citie those that preach him in the Synagoges, where hee is read euery Sabbath daye. By the which wordes, he meaneth nothing else, but that as yet, Moses was of such authoritie among the Jewes, that it was impossible sodainely to pull them from his ordinances. Therefore for the times sake, and for charitie, this was to be graunted them, vntill (mens consciences in the meane season being at libertie) the olde ceremonies might honorably be layde aside and buried. In the meane whyle, we haue to consider, that this was an auncient blage in all ages among the people of God, that the lawe and sacred scriptures were vsed to be reade on the holy dayes. It becommeth vs therefore to keepe the same vse, and diligently to defende our libertie, and hauing a consideration of charitie and puritie of life, beware of gyuing of offences. So shall it come to passe, that both we our selues shall be saued, and shall also bryng others vnto Iesus Christ: to whome be praise, honor, power and glory for euer. Amen.

Ephe. 5.
Heb. 13.

Strangled
and bloude.
Gen. 9. Leuit.
17. and. 19.

Rom. 14.

1. Cor. 8.

The reading
of Moses.

The Ciiij. Homelie.

THE N pleased it the Apostles and Elders, with the whole congregations, to sende chosen men of their owne companye to Antioche with Paule and Barnabas. They sent Iudas whose surname was Barsabas, and Syllas which

Ann. ij.

were

were chiefe men among the brethren, and gaue them letters in their handes after this maner. The Apostles and Elders and brethren sende greeting vnto the brethren which are of the Gentyles at Antioche, Syria, and Cilicia, for as much as we haue hearde, that certaine which departed from vs haue troubled you with wordes, and cumbred your mindes, saying, you must be circumcised and keepe the lawe, to whome we gaue no such commaundement: It seemed therefore vnto vs good, when we were come together with one accorde, to sende chossen men vnto you with our beloued Barnabas and Paule, men that haue icoparded their liues for the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, we haue sent therefore Iudas and Silas, which shall also tell you the same things by mouth, for it seemed good to the holyc ghost and to vs, to charge you with no more than these necessarie things: that is to saye, that yee abstayne from thinges offered to ymages, and from bloud, and from strangled, and from fornication, from which, if you keepe your selues, you shall doe well. So fare you well.



Because all power is gyuen vnto Iesus Christ, from God his father, he can therefore not onely defende and preserve his kingdome, but also so moderate and gouerne all thinges, that whatsoeuer Satan worketh against the same kingdome, he maketh it serue for the setting forth of the same. For after Satan could not by persecutions and open violence stop the course of the gospel, he set vpon the Church by sowing dissention among them, and rayled a grievous contention about iustification, which is the chiefe and principall article of christian religion to this ende and purpose, that all the doctrine of the gospel, might be enuyed and suspected. But he preuayled so little, that by this occasion, the truth was the moze knowne, and the righteousness of fayth the moze valiantly defended, agaynst the Phariseys, as we haue hytherto sene in the sayings of Peter, Paule, and Barnabas, and last of all by Iames saying. Wherevnto chiefly belongeth that ioyfull and victorious ende of all the contention, which Luke now describeth: fyrst rehearsing the consent and agreement of the whole Church, and next a Copie of the Epistle sent from the Synode, of all which we shall speake in order.

The consent
of the coun-
saile of Ieru-
salem.

First, he expresseth the vniforme consent of them all, where he sayeth: the Apostles and Elders, and the whole Congregation, decreed that messengers should be sent with letters to Antioch, where this great fyre was fyrst kindled in all their names. This was very prudently decreed of them, for that the present contention might hereby not onely be alayed, but all occasion of strife in time to come might be preuented. And fyrst, because they whose mindes through contention were moued, might happen to suspect Paule and Barnabas credite in this dealing, they ioyne vnto them messengers of no small dignitie and estimation. Againe, least Silas and Iudas might not seme by craft and subtiltie to be wonne, and made on Pauls side, they commende and defende their authoritie by publike letters. By which example we are taught, that prudence and wisdom is chiefly to be vsed in publike affayres of the Church, least vnadvised rashnesse maye preiudice a cause of it selfe otherwise both good and honest. Here is to be considered the

order

order of the Primitive Church, which the same Church was wont to use in publike assayes. The Apostles in deede with the Elders, had the rule and ordering of all matters, as they who had the oversight of the Church committed vnto them. Yet they took not on them such rule and authoritie to exclude or shut out the people from the hearing of such things, as appertained indifferently vnto the whole Church. Againe, in the people was great consideration of modestie, whereby it came to passe, that euery one gaue place vnto the truth, and none of them prouoked eyther with ambition, or other peruerse affection, would vnadvisedly stirre or make businesse. Nowe where the ambition of Prelates hath disturbed and broken this order, who contrary to the commaundement of Peter the Apostle, haue challenged vnto them, a Lordship ouer the inheritance or Church of Christ, the congregations are euery daye molested with newe contentions, and there appeareth no ende eyther of errors or moste bitter debates. But let vs see the letters of the Synode or Counsaile, where a thing of most weight and importance, is most brievely and plainly entreated. For as truth is easily perceyued and boyde of all guile: so it desireth no fetches, nor affectate ornaments and deckings. This Epistle or letter consisteth of fower partes, all which for the more perspicuitie, we will seuerally speake of.

The first parte containeth the superscription, which nameth the authors of the Epistle, and those to whome the same is written. And they are all so named, as a man may perceyue nothing is spoken of arrogancie or ambition. Yet is there an order obserued, wherof a man must haue regard in euery thing. First are the Apostles placed, because Christ appointed them to be teachers of the whole worlde, and his witnesses, and adourned them with such dignitie, that they are called the salte of the earth, and light of the worlde. After that, are the Elders named, of whose office we haue spoken already befoze. Last of all, all the belauers are comprehended vnder the name of brethren. Therefore these letters are written in the name of the whole Synode and Congregation. And they are written vnto the brethren that dwelt at Antioch in Syria, and Cilicia, amongst whome schisme and troubles were raysed, through the malice and craft of deceyuers. We must marke the calling of one another brethren, which appeareth to be a moste auncient vsage, euen from the time of the Apostles. There is two occasions of this name. We are called brethren, both because we haue all one father which is in heauen, who hath prepared for vs one inheritance of his kingdome, and also for that Jesus Christ the sonne of God taketh vs for his brethren, and doth vouchsafe to make vs coinheritours with him. As therefore this name serueth much for the mainteyning of con corde among Christians: so it bringeth a singular comfort in all kinde of temptations. For it is impossible that Jesus Christ shoulde neglect them, whom he hath once taken for his brethren, and will haue to be heyres of his kingdome. Woulde to God they would expende this name, which now a dayes make such odious differences of Nations, as though no dutie of Christian charitie were due vnto those which are borne out of our countrie. Yet the Apostles acknowledge the Asyrians and Cilicians, people farre distaunt from them, and borne of the Gentyles, to be their brethren. What wickednesse is it therefore to thinke Christian menne, whome Christ taketh for his brethren, for the Countries sake, to be straungers vnto vs? Dought the inheritance

i. The superscription of the letter sent from the Counsaile.

duo obserb first apostles
i. ordo. are placed the
others
Dert. obserb
order and de
cings

2 Caritas in tow respects
is called
1. in respect of
the father
2. and of christ
3. brother
Dert though
remord in plan
yet brethren
1. in comfort
which cannot
neglect brethren
2. not to wrong
one another

Ephc. 4.

ii. The false
Apostles are
touched.

accusation
they were
not of 4th Ar
postles

boasters of au
thority of 4th
council

John: 12. 44
ynough to be
said for apost
but we must
teach as they
do

Galat. 5.

Rom. 4.

Lucas

ritance of the earth to be greater than the inheritance of heaven :

In the seconde part, they grauely controll the deceyuers and false Apostles, euen as the weyght of the cause, and daunger of saluation by them procured, deserued. And fyrst they confesse, they went forth from them, but so as they were no partakers with them. And this they laye as a stopple against their vaine hauntes and bragging. For they bled to saye they came from Ierusalem, and had learned their doctrine of the Apostles, who taught the same learning at Ierusalem. Therefore the Apostles denie not that they went forth from their Church, but yet therefore they aduise not euery man to credite and receyue that they teach. For it is commonly sene, that deceyuers come forth of the Church, as we haue elsewhere taught. Therefore that vaine vanitie of tytles, and succession, whereby the Bishops of Rome defende their dignitie in these dayes, while they alleage the authoritie of the Church of Rome, and the Apostles their Predecessours, is not sufficient. We be not ignozant that the sayth of that Church was once such, that Paule worthily commended the same. We know also that there haue bene many Bishops in the same, of notable godlynesse, faith, and learning, of whome diuers haue bene crowned with martyrdome. But what is all this, to our Bishops now a dayes, whose beliefe, learning, and conuersation, is altogether different from those men. They that will defende themselves by the authoritie of the Church, should followe the steps of the Primitiue Church. This done, they declare what these deceyuers did. They haue troubled you with wordes, and cumbred your mindes. They are therefore disturbers and not builders of the Church, as Paule well obserued, wytyng to the Galatians: I marueyle you are so soone turned vnto another Gospell, which is nothing else, but that there be some that trouble you. Againe: I woulde to God they were seperated from you that trouble you. In these wordes is declared the effect of false doctrine, which a man may espie in all them, which ascribe not vnto Christ onely all the order and praise of our saluation. First, they trouble and make the hearers vncertaine of their saluation, whyles they ouerthrowe sayth. For it cannot be that they haue anye thinge stable and certaine that sticke to the woorkes of the lawe, bicause the lawe exacteth a perfyete and an absolute obedience in all poyntes, which is not in mannes power to perfourme. Wherefore, according to the saying of Paule, as soone as saluation is declared to be in woorkes, then faith is in vaine, and the promyse of none effect. And the false Apostles doe not onely trouble men this waye, but also for that they be authozs of schisme, which must needes ensue, as soone as saluation is not attributed to Christ onely. For example we haue the Church at Corinth, the which Paule complaineth to haue bene deuised into many and diuers factions, through the subtiltie of false teachers. Both these thinges they founde true, which were ledde about with the doctrine of the Monkes, before the light of the Gospell appeared. But the Apostles adde a notable sentence vnto the description of these deceyuers, whereby they manifestly declare, that they gaue the false Apostles no such thing in commaundement. Therefore they accuse them of lying, and thereby likewise declare, that there shall be lyers in all ages, that shall preache the iustification of woorkes, vnder the pretence and name of the Apostles. Lette them therefore crye till they be hoze againe, that they are Legates sent from the Popes side, let them pretende Fathers and Counsayles, let them

them worst scriptures, let them glorie in the authoritie of Kings and Princes: and we shall sette against all these, the Counsaile and authoritie of the Apostles, which openly testifieth, that the Apostles make nothing for them which dare ouerthrowe the righteousnesse of faith, and attribute the glory of our saluation any way vnto workes. Hare, we will referre that saying of Paule vnto this place, who doubted not to strike with Curle, an Angel, presuming to preach any other Gospell than this.

In the thirde member of their deuision, they greatly commende Paule and Barnabas, because they knewe that these deceyuers did greatly impugne their authoritie: which also was the cause that Paule diuers times defended his Apostleship, not without some suspect of ambition, as his Epistles to the Galathians and Corinthians declare. Therefore they call them their beloued, by which name, they accuse all those of lying, which affirmed that Paule discented from the other Apostles. They ioyne here vnto a praise, which is the greatest that can be deuised, where they say they ieperded their liues for the name of Iesus Christ. The example of the Primitiue Church teacheth, that their name and fame which deserue well in setting forth the saluation of men, ought to be maintained & defended. And this is not to be iudged as any flatterie, when it is done modestly, and to that ende, to keepe their authoritie vnblemished. Thus it pleased Christ to adourne the sonnes of Zebede with worshipfull tytles, as long as their vertuous doings so deserued. And Paule sometime digresseth, and taketh occasion to commende Titus, Luke, Timothie, Epaphroditus, and such like, both to spurre them forward, and also that their ministry might the more profitably procede and go forward. And this is to be obserued, not onely in the Church, but also in the common weale, because liuely and contagious spiritess, are no waye more effectually cheared, to take in hande vertuous and worthy exploitess, than by prayse and honoz. And there are euerywhere examples that teach vs, that no common weales haue long flourished, where there haue not bene appoynted worthy rewardes of commendation and honoz for well deseruers. Furthermore, in this place is expressed, what the true prayse of a Minister is, verily, when necessitie so requireth, to laye downe his life for the testimonie and name of Iesus Christ. For, as he deserueth not to be called a good souldiour, who is not redy to hazard his life, if the commaundement of his Captaine, & publike weale so require: so can he be no faythfull minister of Christ, which is not ready to forsake all he hath, yea, & his life to, for the glory of Christ, & thus doth Christ euen of very equity and right require of vs, seeing he fyrst did vouchsafe to laye downe his life, for the saluation of all mankind. And yet these thinges are not so to be vnderstanded, as though none shoulde be taken for a faythfull Minister of Christ, but he that hath hazarded his lyfe. For Christ woulde not haue vs rathe, and to prodigall of our liues, but rather he commaundeth vs to vse the prudence of serpents, shunning and taking hede of daungers. And many times there appeareth no daunger, why we should feare our life, yet in the meane time it is required, that we should be prompt and ready in minde, that we steppe not backe, when with perill of our life we shoulde defende the glorye of Christ. This promptnesse of minde doth Paule shewe, when being admonished howe he shoulde be layde in bondes, he confessed that he was ready not onely to suffer bondes or imprisonment, but also death for the name of Christ.

Galat. 1.

14. Paule and Barnabas are commended.

Commended
beloued

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mendeth Luke
et: the same
commendeth
commendation
not left in
scriptures
of gods family
not to flatter
but to spur

the special
commendation
of a minister
is feare his
lyfe for truth

Luke. 9.

iiij. The dec-
ree of the
Counsaile is
expounded.

Luke 10.

Christ. See the Actes. xx. and. xxi. And that that is sayde of the Ministers of the worde, is vnderstanded also of all that be Christians. For it is an vniuersall rule, which commaundeth vs to confesse Christ before the world, and teacheth that he is not fytt for the kingdome of God, which looketh backe agayne, after he hath once sette his hande vnto the plough.

The fourth part expoundeth the decree of the Synode, in the which Peter and Iames sayings are repeated and reconcyled: in the which place we haue orderly to consider thre things: first, they alleage the author of the decree, namely the holy ghost: it hath seemed good (saye they) vnto the holy ghost and to vs. They ioyne themselves with the holpe ghost, not meaning to match their authoritie with his, or that they woulde be belæued alone, without the consent of the spirite, but bicause Christ made them Ministers of his spirite, by whom he thought good to utter his Oracles. In the which meaning also it is sayde: He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despyseth you, despyseth me, and he that despyseth mee, despyseth him that sent mee. Therefore bicause the Apostles pronounced nothing but that the holy ghost bade them, they ioyne themselves after none insolent sort, but after a modest and conuenient grauitie vnto the holpe ghost, least they might seeme to dissent from him. And that the thing they write is the oracle of the holpe ghost, it appeareth by this, that they decree nothing repugnant vnto the holy Scriptures. And if the President of the Popes Counsailes may say the same of their decrees, we will confesse that they also are gathered together in the holy ghost, and that the thinges they enact are the decrees and Statutes of the spirite. But as oft as they shall put forth opinions harpyng fro the Scriptures, and repugnant vnto them, so oft will we demie that they are ledde with the holy ghost, bicause he cannot disagree with himselfe, forasmuch as he is the spirite of truth. Secondly, they declare what it is that seemeth good vnto the holy ghost, namely, that we shoulde charge you with no more yoke and burthen. Therefore whatsoever is beside the fayth in Iesus Christ, is a yoke and a burthen. For mennes consciences are burthened with the vnpromysable obseruation of traditions, which can not further our saluation. They repeate also what Iames had prescribed touching the eating of things offered to Idols, touching whoredome, strangled, and bloude, and they saye these are necessary to be obserued. Here is to be noted what we sayd in the last Homelie, touching the differences of these commaundementes. For the two fyrst are simple and plainly necessarye, bicause it becommeth Christian men to abhorre all kinde of ydolatrie, and to keepe their vessell or body holpe and vnspecked, and not to make that the member of an harlot, that Christ by his bloude, hath consecrated to be a Temple for the holy ghost. But concerning the decree of strangled and bloude, they are necessary per accidens (as they say) or by reason of another thing, that is to saye, bicause of offence, which the weake brethren might take by the eating thereof. For where it is an heynous matter to destroye him by thy eating, whom Christ hath bought to redeeme by the merit of his bloude, we must of necessity abstaine from those things for the weakes sake, which otherwise of themselves are graunted a lawfull, least our libertie may giue vnto other occasion of destruction. Otherwise, this saying of Christ standeth in his full force and strength: Nothing that goeth in at the mouth, can defyle man. And Paule permitteth men to eate of the thinges of-

Math. 15.

fred

ferred to Idols, if there be no daunger of offence, and sayth that the conscience is no whit polluted thereby. And in another place he calleth it a doctrine of Devils, when such a difference of meate is appoynted, as where in saluation is sayde to consist. Therfore they most foolishly abuse this place, which saye the decrees of Counsaylers are necessary to be obserued, whereas diuers of them serue onely to poke mennes consciences, and manifestly repugne against the euident Oracles of Scripture. In the meane season Christian libertie must not be ouerthrowne, for their sakes, which being rather obstinate than weake, will not forsake their once conceyued errors, but by all meanes cleaue to the defence of the same. Against whome, Christ his saying must rather be vsed. Suffer not them, for they are blinde leaders of the blinde. Finally, they declare the vtilitie and profyte hereof, saying: from these things, if you keepe your selues, you shall doe well. For both you shall keepe your selues cleane and vndefyled, and offende no man. This must be the marke wherevnto all our doings must be leuelled. In Christ onely by sayth we must seeke iustification and saluation. In the meane season let vs keepe our selues from all contamination, both of Idolatrie, and other uncleannesse, and endeavour as much as in vs lyeth, to bring other men to saluation, and let vs not giue offence vnto them, for whome Christ hath boughsed to die. These things whosoever will obserue, they cannot be deceyued and erre, and hauing prosperously ended the course of this lyfe, they shall obtayne the fellowship of eternall life with Iesus Christ our Lorde: to whome be blessing, honoz, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

1. Cor. 10.

1. Tim 4.

Math. 15.

The.Cv.Homely.

WHEN they therfore were departed, they came to Antioch, and gathered the multitude together, and deliuered the Pistle, which when they had read, they reioyced of the consolation. And Iudas and Silas being Prophetes, exhorted the brethren with much preaching, and strengthened them. And after they had taryed there a space, they were let go in peace of the brethren vnto the Apostles. Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still. But Paule and Barnabas taryed still at Antioch, teaching and preaching the worde of the Lorde with other many. But after a certaine space Paule sayde vnto Barnabas, let vs go againe and visite our brethren in euerye Citie, where wee haue shewed the worde of the Lorde, and see howe they doe. And Barnabas gaue counsayle to take with them Iohn, whose surname was Marke. But Paule would not take him vnto their company, which departed from them at Pamphilia, and went not with them to the woorke. And the contention was so sharpe betweene them, that they departed a sunder one from the other, and so Barnabas tooke Marke, and sayled vnto Cyprus, and Paule chose Silas, and departed, being committed of the brethren vnto the grace of God. And hee went through Syria and Cilicia, establishing the Congregations.



After the Euangelist Luke hath diligently described the Actes of the Counsayle at Ierusalem, and shewed with what dexteritie that contention was calmed and appeased, which beganne among the Christians, about the matter of iustification, now in the last part of this chapter, which we haue

1. The execu-
tion of the
ambassage
vnto the church
at Antioch.

here recyted, he rehearseth fower things chiefly to be considered, whereof we meane to intreate so much as the grace of God obtayned by your prayers, shall suffer vs.

First is described the execution of the ambassage or message which the Ierosolymites sent to them of Antiochia, wherein is to be considered what the Ambassadors Paule and Barnabas did, and next howe the Church of Antioch receyued them. Touching the Ambassadors three things are sayde. First, when they came to Antioch, after the congregation was wholy assembled, they deliuered the letters taken them by the counsaile. For where it was a publike matter, and indifferently appertaining vnto all men, they thought they would not haue any thing hidden from the people. Where we may agayne see the maner of the primitive Church, in the which such matters as belonged to the knowledge and saluation of all men, were intreated in all mens hearing. The ambition of Maslike Bishops, hath bitterly taken awaye this custome, with the great detriment of publike saluation, who haue iudged the ignorance and blindnesse of the people to be the chiefe bountrace and defence of their tyrannie. Then next Iudas and Silas with many exhortations and consolations, confyrme the brethren in the receyued and acknowledged truth. For the which ende and purpose, the Apostle abundantly declareth that they were sent. Yet is there a reason rendred of their so doing, because they were Prophetes, that is to saye, publike expositors or interpreters of scriptures, lawfully ordeyned. For that the name of a Prophete is taken in this sense, it manifestly appeareth by the first Epistle to the Corinthians. xiii. Chapter. This place in the meane season admonisheth vs, that no man ought to take vpon him to doe anye thing publicly in the church, but he that is lawfully called, and instructed with worthy and conuenient giftes. For pernicious and detestable is the impudency of the Anabaptistes, who being neyther called nor furnished with fyt gifts, rashly start forth and take vpon them to preach. Thirdly, they depart not from Antioch, before they are dismissed in peace and with solempne blessing, and that they see all troubles well composed and asswaged. All which if a man conferre and laye together, it shall appeare that in this Legacie of theirs, they vsed great diligence and trust, and it is no doubt but the holye ghost by a generall example woulde teach vs, with what credite and industrie publike affaires, aswell Ecclesiasticall as Ciuile, ought to be handled. Furthermore, as touching the Church, it is sayde that she receyued them with ioye, and was much recreated by them. Before this, the Epistle sent from the Synode, declareth they were much disturbed by reason of discension. For the godly men were much grieved, that the articles of the Christian fayth were contended vpon, with such great offence. Againe, another cause of grieve there was, that they sawe the Apostles Paule and Barnabas vnworthily defamed, and their Churches, after a sort, priuily accused. Therefore they cannot chouse but greatly reioyce, when they heare that peace is restored, their teachers quitte of slander, and their Churches confirmed with the testimonie of the Apostles. Of this disposition ought all faythfull Christians to be, vnto whome they are farre vnlike, that are delighted with contentions, with the ignominie and contempt of Ministers, and with the disturbance of congregations.

2. The indu-

Secondly, Luke describeth the trusty care and industrie of all these per-

sons

sons, in the setting forth and mainteyning of Christes kingdome, which maye be perceyued by many and euident argumentes. And as concerning Silas, it is sayde, that when he had licence to returne home againe, yet he chose rather to remaine at Antioch, doubtlesse for that he perceyued his traueyle, whereof he sawe good successe followed, was yet needefull for that Church. Therefore Silas had more regarde of the Church of Christ, than of his owne matters, considering he preferreth Antioche before the Citie of Ierusalem, and his owne proper habitation. Which example it becommeth all the Ministers of Christ to imitate, that they maye forsake themselves, and all earthly things, to thende to traueyle the more easily in the ministerie of Christ and his Church. Therefore the couetousnesse of them is execrable, who being appoynted to the ministerie of the Church, preferre their priuate doings before the saluation of men, and for lucre sake, leaue the congregation, among whome they might with great vtilitie doe good seruice. But of Paule and Barnabas is somewhat also sayde, namely, howe after they had abidden a certaine season at Antioch, they preached the Gospel, with many other their fellow Ministers. Therefore they gaue not themselves vnto lurdently ydlenesse, although they might seme after so manye daungers and traueyles, to haue had iust occasion, to haue sought their rest and quiet. And in that it is sayde, many in the Church at Antioch preached the Gospell, it maye easily be gathered, what myldenesse of mindes was among them, and howe boyde they were of enuie, seeking nothing more than the glory of Christ, and the saluation of many. And the exercise of the Apostles is most worthy to be considered, who, as we see, chiefly intended the preaching of the Gospell. For they knewe that was the message of saluation. They knewe that with these weapons, Nations were subdued vnto Christ, and the worlde brought vnto the obedience of fayth. They knewe finally, that our Sauour Christ was chiefly busied about this one thing, and did nothing so oftentimes as that. And they were not ignorant of the olde fygure, where God commaunded that the Priestes besture shoulde be hewing with belles, thereby teaching that the sounde of his voyce, that is, the doctrine of the gospell was chiefly to be required of the ministers. But now adayes it is come to this passe, that Bishops abhorre from nothing so much as from the ministerie of the worde, thinking it to be more commendable for them, to fede Houndes and great Horses, and a sluggish and seruile sort of Courtlings, of the reuenues of the Church, than to fede Christes sheepe with the fode of heauenly doctrine. And so by their example, they bring the worde of God in contempt with all states of menne, which is the chiefe cause of the calamities of these dayes. There is also added an other argument of Pauls doctrine, namely, howe he was carefull also for other Churches, consulting with Barnabas, touching the visitation of them. For he well vnderstode that it was not sufficient once to plant Churches, but also howe it was very necessary to visite and looke vnto them, bicause beside the naturall leuitie of mankinde, diuers other thinges also fell out, which might plucke vs from the fayth, and disturbe and ouerturne the best ordred Churches that are. Wherefore like a stowte souldiour he kepeth his watch and standing, and spareth no labour, so the Church may enioye that peace, for the which they were once ordeyned, which example if a man woulde compare with those, which are wholye giuen to disturbe and ouer-

stie of Syllas,
Paule & Bar-
nabas in set-
ting forth &
kingdome of
Christ.

Exod. 28.

3. The dis-
cention be-
tweene Paule
and Barnabas

Luke. 9.

throwe the Churches stablished by the fayth and diligence of others, it shoulde easily appeare with what spirite they are ledde, and what Princes Ministers they are.

Thirdly, is declared a greivous and infortunate discorde betweene Paule and Barnabas, which for many causes is notable. We hearde before in the thirtenth Chapter howe these two were made fellowes and Coparteners by the holy ghost. They suffred many perils together, both by lande and by sea, which is the greatest bande to binde amitie and friendship together that can be. Beside, they proued that God did marueylously blesse their labours with good successe. But nowe by reason of a greivous discention fallen among them, they depart one from another, and we reade not that they afterwarde ioyntly laboured together any moze. The cause of this contention was one Iohn Marke, of whose defection and falling awaye hath bene spoken in the. xiiij. Chapter. Barnabas thought good to haue him taken in agayne into the grace and fellowship of the Ministerie, and no doubt but he alleaged weyghty reasons for his deuyse. For with God there is pardon, if men acknowledge and confesse their faulte. And it is euident that Peter after he had denyed Christ, was restored to his former roome and dignity agayne. And the godlinesse of Marie his mother seemed not a little to relieue his cause, who when persecution raged most, lette hir house be a certayne hauens and sanctuarie, as it were for the godlye. But for all these reasons Paule coulde neuer be perswaded to consent to haue such an one to his fellowe, whome he remembred had so fowly slidde backe in the middle of his course, and perhaps not without the greivous offence of many. For he remembred Christes saying: No man that layeth his hande to the plough, and looketh backe, is meete for the kingdome of God. And if we consider the circumstances, it shall seme that Paule was holpen with the consent and approbation of the Church. For he choosing vnto him Silas, is commended of the brethren vnto the grace of God, that is, with solemne prayer is let goe vnto his work or businesse. Of Barnabas Luke reporteth but this one thing, that he toke vnto him Marke, and sayled into Cyprus (which was his countrie, as was sayde before in the fourth Chapter) being moued, and taking the matter in yll part. And although Pauls seueritie in euerye poynt seme not to be excused, yet woulde the holy ghost haue this example to remayne as a President against all runnagates and forsakers of their profession, whereby we might learne, that sinners haue an accesse vnto the grace of God, but yet that they must not be to soone admitted into the ministerie of the Church, which haue bene authors of any greivous offence, and whose credite by reason of their offences before committed, is not without a cause suspected. For a Bishop must be blamelesse, and Paule forbiddeth yong scholars chiefly to be kept out of the Ministerie, because such are in daunger of backbiting and slaundering. Nowe adaves because we be to soone intreated in admitting of euerye one, it is no marueyle though the authoritie of the Ministerie growe so much in contempt. Moreover, it maye seme to anye man marueylous, that God woulde suffer such most chosen vessels of his grace, to be intangled in such implacable hatred, and that the holye ghost woulde haue their errors recorded in wytyng, for their sake that shoulde come after. But to him that shall deeply ponder these things, there shall appeare to be diuers iust and weightye causes of this doing. For fyrst these things

things teache vs, that euen the holpest men also, are subiect to perturbations of minde, and therefore haue neede of the grace of God. This Paule acknowledgeth, where he writeth that he felte the pricke of the fleshe, and had the messenger of Satan sent him, agaynst the which he had none other wayes to resist, but by the grace of God. The same Paule writing of the lawe of sinne, which in all men fyghteth against the spirite of God, cryeth out: O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from this body subdued vnto death? I thanke God, through Iesus Christ our Lorde. The vse of all these things is, to teach vs that whatsoeuer things holy men doe commendably, we should ascribe them vnto God, as to the authoz, and only magnifye him therefore. Againe, these flydinges of holpe men, stirre vs vp vnto a feruent and continuall desire of godlinesse, that according to Pauls saying we may worke our saluation with feare and trembling. For who will not be afrayde? who will not be stirred vp to watch and praye, when he seeth such notable seruaunts of God, so grievously fall? Who will not stande in dreade to fall, yea, euen then when he seemeth to stand sure? There is also another vse and commoditie of this contention, that we now adayes be not offended with the discensions of the Ministers of the worde, nor for discensions sake suspect the doctrine of Gods worde. For the authoritie thereof dependeth not on man, but as Esaias sayeth, endureth for ever, when all fleshe with the glory thereof wythereth and falleth away like a flower.

The fourth and last poynt of this Chapter is the peregrination of Paule and Barnabas, in which they execute and perfourme their deuise concerning the visiting and confyrming the Churches in the word of God. For although they disagreed among themselves, yet is neyther of them vndermindefull of his dutie. But Barnabas goeth into Cyprus, and Paule into Syria and Cilicia, and from thence into Lycaonia. And this constancie is worthy of all men to be followed, that we suffer not our selues by contention and importunitie of men to be ouercome, and so forgetting our duties, become vnfaithfull vnto God. In the meane season it behoueth vs to consider the goodnesse and wisdom of God, which knoweth best howe to vse the offences of his people. For of this lamentable discorde of the Apostles, springeth this profyte, that diuers Churches are at one very time visited and confyrmed. Yea, God many tymes bleseth the sinnes of the wicked to the setting forth of his glory, and the saluation of manne. Examples whereof are extant, both in the sale of Ioseph, and manye other hystories. Yet let no man for all this thinke vs boyde of fault. For men sinne, and by sinne deserue to be made the vessels of wrath. And if any good followe of their offending, all that is to be ascribed to the goodnesse and wisdom of God. God graunt that by vs his name may be glorified, and that our most mercifull father woulde vse all our doinges to that ende, to serue for the commoditie and saluation of many, that we may lyue in heauen

with Iesus Christ: to whome be all prayse, honour,
power, and glorye, for euer.

Amen.

2. Cor. 12.

Rom. 7.

Phil. 2.

1. Cor. 10.

Esay. 40.

4. Paule and
Barnabas visit
the churches.

The

The. xvj. chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The. Cvj. Homelie.

THEN came he to Derba and to Lystra, and beholde a certaine Disciple was there named Timotheus, a womans sonne which was a Jewesse, and beleueed, but his father was a Greeke. Of whome reported well the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paule that he should go forth with him, and toke and circumcised him bicause of the Iewes that were in those quarters. For they knew al that his father was a Greke. As they went through the Cities, they deliuered them the decrees for to keepe, that were ordeyned of the Apostles and Elders which were at Ierusalem. And so were the congregations stablished in the fayth, and increased in number daily.



The Apostle Paule appoynted to visite the Churches, which he had gathered together by preaching of the Gospel, and to conserue them in the fayth they had once receyued, least being either drowened in securitie, or circumuented with the subtiltie of Satan, or overcome wth persecutions, they shoulde fall away. This he so doth, that wheresoeuer occasion also is offred, he laboureth to winne moe congregations vnto Christ. This hystorie Luke in this place describeth, who was Pauls continuall

companion in this iourney, and therfore as a witnesse that sawe all things, knewe all things well. And fyrst we hearde how they went ouer Syria and Cilicia. Then it followeth what they did in Lycaonia, the Churches wherof by reason of the Jewes, the bitterest enimies that Christ had, had more neede to be strengthened than others, and hereof Paule stode in feare, bicause he had diuers times tryed the hostile attemptes, and implacable mindes of the Jewes.

The calling
of Timothie.

Moreover, the Euangelist taketh his beginning of the calling of Timothie, whome Paule toke vnto him as a companion in his boyage, and partener in all his labors. For he knewe that without fyfte Ministers of the worde, the kingdome of Christ and fayth in him could not be enlarged. Wherefore, as the Princes of this world, which labour to dilate and stretch out their borders a farre, are altogether occupied about getting of long tryed Captaynes, and bolde souldiours from all places: so was this the chiefe

care

care of Paule, to searche and get many faythfull and fyttē Ministers for the Church of Christ, by whome the kingdome of Christ might be stretched farre and wyde, whoſoener deſire the ſafetie of the Church, whether they be teaching Biſhops or ruling Magiſtrates, they muſt followe this example. For as without the preaching of the worde, newe Churches cannot be planted: ſo thoſe that are already planted and gathered together, cannot be kept in doing theiſe dutie without the ſame. Hereof proceeded that care and induſtry, which the Prophetes of the olde Teſtament had about ſchools, which our Predeceſſors being moſt prudent and godly men did imitate, as the foundations of moſt auncient Colledges doe teſtifie. In the vocation of Timothie, there are two things to be conſidered, wherof we ſhall ſpeake in order.

Fiſt, it is deſcribed, who and what maner of one he was. He had to his mother a Jewe, but one that beleued, but his father was a Greke, that is to ſaye, a Gentyle. And Paule in hys later Epiſtle to Timothie, doth at large commend the godlineſſe of Eunice his mother, and Lois his grandmother, wherof this is a moſt euident argument, for that he procured hir ſonne to be well brought up, in the fayth & religion of Chriſt. And here Luke ſayth, that he was a diſciple, that is to ſay a chriſtian, before Paule called him to the office of the eccleſiaſticall miniſterie. Beſides, he ſayth he was well commended of all brethren & that not of thoſe at Lyſtra only, where he had his dwelling, but alſo by them of Iconium, ſo that his godlyneſſe was perceiued and knowne to them abroad alſo. This deſcription of Timothie teacheth vs what maner of men ought to be choſen into the miniſterie of Gods word & church. Where it becometh the greateſt care to be had for religion, leaſt ſuch as eyther are bitterly deuoyde of fayth, or elſe yong ſcholars and ſcouers be choſen into the Miniſterie. For as theſe laſt ſort commonly are vncertaine and ſtande in doubt of all things, and lyght and inſtaunt: ſo the other vſe religion but for lucre, which they alſo laughe at in their ſneue, and cauſe other menne to deride the ſame. Then muſt a reſpect be had of their learning, that we maye haue ſuch to gouerne the Church, as are well exerciſed in the holy ſcripture, wherin Paule teſtifieth, Timothie was brought up of a chyld. For in dede it is impoſſible that he ſhould teach other, whoſe ſelfe before hath not learned, and ſuch can be none other than blind leaders of the blinde, as Chriſt calleth them Math. 15. And where the doctrine of the Church muſt be taken out of the holy Scriptures, it becometh that Miniſters of the Church ſhoulde be moſte exerciſed in them, and that there is no account to be made of them, though they be neuer ſo expert and prompt in Philoſophye, if they be rude and ignorant in the holy Scripture. Which was the cauſe that Chriſt woulde not ſuffer the Apoſtles to go abroad to preach before they were well inſtructed. Thirdly, it becometh that he haue the teſtimonie of an approued lyfe and conuerſation, leaſt their doctrine be contemned, or at the leaſt ſuſpected for their ſake. Therfore Paule will haue a Biſhop to be irreprehenſible. And how much religion and doctrine is deſaced by the diſhoneſt lyfe of Miniſters, the example of the ſonnes of Elye doth abundantly declare, through whoſe concupiſcence and ſacrilegious boldeneſſe, it came to paſſe, that all the people for the moſt part refrayned from the worſhipping of God, and by that occaſion wickedneſſe ſo preuailed among all ſortes of men, that it coulde not be redreſſed, but by publike calamities.

What Timothie is, and what maner of man.

2. Tim. 3.

1. Tim. 3.

calamitie and much bloudshedding. Therefore Paules prudence and diligence must be followed in these dayes, who woulde take vnto hym no companion in the Ministerie, but such an one as was perfecte in all poynts, and which had so confirmed the hope conceyued of him, as it seemed he woulde neuer breake the same.

Timothie is
circumcised.

Galat. 2.

1. Cor. 9.

Secondly, let vs fyrst consider what Paule did with this newe partner and fellowe of his: Him (sayth he) bicause Paule ment to haue wyth him in his iourney, he tooke & circumcised. What is this (sayest thou) that I heare? What lyghtnesse and inconstancie is this? Not long before Paule earnestly bent himselfe agaynst those which exacted Circumcision of the Gentyles, and such a disturbance grewe hereupon, that the matter was harde to be taken by and quieted, before the Apostles and the whole congregation at Ierusalem. And now after the Apostles had decreed that the Gentyles were not to be burthened with Circumcision, Paule circumciseth Timothie, who had bene a Chrystian a good whyle before. But herein is nothing done of lyghtnesse or frowardnesse, bicause Paule hath great reason for his doing, neyther doth he varpe from himselfe, if we well consider the matter. For it was well done of Paule to withstande the Pharisees or Nazareanes, which byged Circumcision as a necessarye thing, forasmuch as by that opinion, Chyestes merite was defaced and extenuated, the sayth in hym lyght set by, and Chyistian libertie ouerthrowne and subuerted. And bicause of these men he woulde not circumcise Titus, for that he perceyued they craftily laide snares for the libertie of the saythfull. And here he circumciseth Timothie, bicause of a great number of Jewes, which dwelt in those parties that by this occasion Timothie might haue an accesse and entry in to them to preach the Gospell among them. For it is well knowne, howe greatly the Jewes abhorred the vncircumcised Gentyles, insomuch that they openly accused Peter, for that he was conuersant wyth them, and afterwarde layde handes on Paule as a seditious person, for bringing the Gentyles into the Temple. Unlessse therefore he had circumcised Timothie, he woulde neuer haue had accesse to haue taught among the Jewes, and they woulde afterward also haue stopped their eares at Paule, as a transgressour of their lawe, and auncient religion. Therefore he prudentlye yeldeth thus farre vnto their infyrmitie, and circumciseth Timothie, to thintent that by his ministerie, he myght make a waye into the Jewes, and teache them by little and little, howe Circumcision and the other Ceremonies were by Chyist abrogated. And he ment none other wayes to circumcise Timothie, than as the Apostles in their Synode, forbade the eating of strangled and bloude. So he confesseth he became a Jewe vnto the Jewes, to wyne the Jewes vnto Chyist, and not to confyrme them, in the superstitious obseruation of the lawe. Of this may be gathered an vniuersall rule, whereby we are taught howe and after what sorte it is lawfull to dispence in outward things. Namely, when charitie and the edification of the Church so requireth. But assoone as we perceyue they bynd worship vnto them, or erecte confidence in mannes merite, or craftily go about to entrappe Chyistian libertie, then must we not admit or suffer the least of them. For those things which might be taken for meane and indifferent, as soone as the profession of our sayth and the glory of Chyestes merite is in hazarde. Therefore the Papistes doe foolishly and to unpudentlye alleage the example of Paule for their traditions,

ons, whyles by this reason that Paule circumcised Timothie, they saye we ought to retayne and keepe Images, pompous Diriges, prayers for the deade, fastings, differences of meates and garments, lingle life, yfonicke bowes, auricular confession, absolution, satisfaction, and sixe hundredth Archlike. For to omitt howe they compare the pientie and superstitious denyales of mannes inventions, wyth Circumcision, whych had his beginning of God, Butters and bleare eyed (as they say) know, howe they set the chiefe part of Gods worship in these thinges, howe they repose their greatest trust of rightedushelle and saluation in them, and to conclude, Christian libertie cannot be mayntayned, if these be retayned, yea, these thyngs conseyne that notable marke of the beast, which no man can receyue or keepe wythout denyng of Christ. Wherfore it becommeth Christian men, rather to impugne these thinges, than neuer so little to violate the profession of Christes name.

Before we passe from this place, we haue to consider the marriage of Timothies parents, forasmuch as Luke maketh expresse mention thereof. He sayth that Eunice his mother was a Jewe, and his father a Greke or a Gentyle. Yet we reade that Jewes were forbidden to marrye with the Gentyles. Yet such was the state of the people of the Jewes in those daies, that being oppressed vnder the tyranny of the Romanes, and dispersed here and there, they were driuen to suffer many things agaynst their wyll. In the meane season the godly woman Eunice, by reason of this marriage, was in such daunger, as God foreshewed in his lawe. For she was not able by Circumcision to take hir sonne Timothie into the societie of Gods people, who no doubt was borne before Christ suffered, and the lawe was abrogated, by reason hir husbände withstode hir, who as it is like was denyde of true religion, bicause Paule commendeth him in no place, and yet setteth forth in writing the worthy fayth of Eunice and Lois. These thinges ought to feare the professors of Christian fayth, from drawing the yoke with Infydels, as elsewhere the Apostle sayth. Also the example of Eunice is very notable, which procured hir sonne to be trayned vp in the scriptures from his childehoode, agaynst hir husbändes will, least he shoulde be corrupted with the superstition and ydolatrie of the Gentyles. Lette Matrones matched in such vnlyke marriages well obserue this thing. Let them remember that their children be holy, by reason of the promise of the couenaunt, as Paule plainly teacheth. Let them therefore bring them vp in the doctrine of true godlynesse, and trayne them vnto God, whose honoz if they seeke with all their heart, they shall fynde him true of his promises, where he sayeth he will be their protector and defender.

But let vs come to the treatie of this present place, where after the vocation of Timothie, is declared what they which were with Paule taught in the Churches. As they went (sayth he) through the Cities, they deliuered them such things to obserue and keepe, as were decreed by the Apostles and Elders at Ierusalem. Which wordes the Papistes wrest, I wote not to what manner of traditions, which they imagine the Apostles and their successors deliuered from hande to hande, vnto the Church, but were neuer written. This Sanctuarie being by them once founded, whatsoeuer they cannot proue by authozite of Scripture, they saye by and by, it is the tradition of the Apostles. But Luke sayth no such thyng, but speaketh of those decrees

Timothie is borne of parents, thone a Jewe, thone a Gentyle.

2. Cor. 6.

1. Cor. 7.

The doctrine of Paule and his companions.

whereof mention was made in the chapter before going. They were these, that man was iustified and saved by the onely grace of God, through faith in Iesus Christ, and not by the works of the lawe, that we should abstaine from those things which pollute the profession of our faith, and our holynesse, as is Idolatrie and fornication: that we must labour for loue, and in outwarde things yelde somewhat vnto the weake, or else vnto such as are not yet come vnto the faith, if there be any hope of winning them. In the meane season that we be ware mennes consciences be not marled, or charged with any burthen intollerable. These things Luke sayth that Paule and those with him, did euerywhere inculcate, both to repress the Jewes, which to importunately bzged the Gentyles to the obseruing of the lawe, and to brydle the licentiousnesse of the Gentyles, which abused the Christian libertie with great offence. For he chiefly desired that peace might flourish in the Church, whereby he knewe the same shoulde chiefly increase. Agayne, where there was no daunger of offence, he constantlye defended the libertie of Christ, because he woulde not preiudice the same, which thing the Apostles woked at, for the weakes sake. The first Epistle to the Corinthians teacheth the same, where he maketh the eating of thynges offered to Idolles free, as touching conscience, if there be none present that is offended therewith. In the meane season Pauls example teacheth vs, that it is not sufficient to haue good lawes made, vnlesse they which haue the charge thereof, see them put in execution. For dayly experience teacheth vs that execution is the lyfe and sinewes of the lawe. Take that alwaye, and the lawe shall lye as deade, and as Anacharis sayde shall become lyke vnto Spydres webbes, which euery bolde and presumptuous bodie will not sticke to breake. Therefore let both Ministers of the Church and gouernors of the common weale imitate Paule, if they meane to doe their ducie, and not rather with bayne counterfeyting mocke both God and man.

1. Cor. 10.

The profyte
of the Apostles
labour.

Last of all, Luke addeth a notable successe of their most godly endeuour and labour, where he sayth the Churches were confyrmmed in the faith, and grewe and increased euery day more and more in number. And because he maketh mention of faith, it is euident that Paule chieflye beate that into their heades, and not bayne and colde Ceremonies and traditions. These are the continuall effectes of the worde of God, that lyke vnto a stone it neuer returneth wythout fruite vnto him that sent it. These also are the weapons wherby the kingdome of Christ in this world is most prosperously enlarged, to saye, diligent preaching of the worde, and feruent desire to conserue and keepe the same. Whensoever these cease, by and by faith falleth, and all loue of true religion dyeth. We haue examples hercof euerywhere, whereby they are conuincd, which thinke it sufficient, if they be not constrayned through tyrannie to be partakers of wicked sacrifices, and yet in the meane season they liue in such places, where the worde of God is banished, and no duties of Christian religion exercised. Let vs all therefore studye to set forth the worde of God, that both our selues maye be confyrmmed in the faith, and the Church daylye increase in number of belauers, wherein Iesus Christ onely reygne, the sauour of mankynde, and onely Bydegrowe of the Church: to whome be prayse, honoz, powet, and glozy, for euer. Amen.

The. Cviij. Homelie.

WHEN they had gone throughout Phrygia, and the Region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the holy ghost to preache the worde in Asia, they came to Myfia, and sought to go into Bithynia, but the spirite suffered them not. But when they had gone thorowe Myfia, they came downe to Troada. And a vision appeared to Paule in the night, There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him saying: Come into Macedonia, and helpe vs. After he had seene the vision, immediately we prepared to go into Macedonia, being certified that the Lorde had called vs, for to preache the Gospell vnto them. When we losed forth then from Troada, we came with a straye course to Samothracia, and the next daye to Neapolis, and from thence to Philippos, which is the chiefe Citie in the partes of Macedonia, and a free Citie.



The spirite of our Lorde Jesus Christe

woulde that the iourneyes and boyages of the Apostles, and specially those of Paule, shoulde be diligently described, bicause the same make not a little for our instruction. For by them appeareth a great goodnesse of God, which within so short a space of tyme, did bouchsafe to lighten all the worlde with the doctrine of the gospell, and saluation, and to bring the prophane Gen-

tyles when they were most corrupt, to the knowledg & fellowship of him. It appeareth also by this hystorie, by what meanes and weapons the kingdom of God useth here on earth, both to be enlarged and conserued. Verily, by the preaching of the Gospell, whereby in despyte of the worlde, the spirite of God bloweth where it will, as Christ otherwheres sayeth. And where God doth bouchsafe to vse the ministerie of men herein, he required of them earnest diligence, and bigilant zeale. Wherein we haue to imitate Paule of all others, touching whose feruent zeale Luke reporteth manye things. Whereof this is no simple argument and pꝛoofe, that not contented to haue gayned many Congregations vnto Christ, he goeth agayne to visite them, and confyrmeth them by faithfull admonitions: teaching vs that we must be carefull in the matter of our saluation, bicause all men knowe the sleightes of Satan, which laboureth to turne vs or euer we be ware, out of the way of saluation. Yet Paule so visitteth the congregations, that he endeuoreth to gather and gayne newe companies vnto Christ, of the which thing in this place Luke chiefly intreateth.

First, it is sayde, he went through Phrygia and Galacia. And that there were newe congregations there erected, the Epistle of Paule to the Galathians abundantly declareth, conteyning in a compendious and perfyte abridgement, all the whole summe of Euangelike doctrine. In that iourney came to passe this one thing most marueylous of all other, that they were forbidden by the holy ghost to preach the Gospell in Asia. Under the name of Asia is comprehended that part, which bordering on the sea westwarde, conteyneth in the continent Aeolia and Lydia, aboue Ephesus and Smyrna, and Ionia it selfe. Which countries as they are most fruitfull and rich of all others, so for this cause they were very vnhappye, in that Christ would not

The vse of
the Apostles
peregrinatio
or traueyling

Phrygia and
Galacia are
conuerted.

Paule is for-
bidden to
preach in Asia

at this time, they should heare the doctrine of saluation. Such was the case of Bythinia also, into the which the same spirite of Christ would not suffer Paule to go neyther. By which argument it easily appeareth that the Apostles wandered not about the worlde at their owne pleasure, but did all things by the guiding and ordering of the spirite of GOD, for we knowe that this holpe spirite, was promised and giuen vnto them by Christ. Beside that they had singuler reuelations when neede was, whereof we had example befoze in Peter and Philip, where the Ethiopian Eunuch and Cornelius the Centurion by their ministry should be conuerted. This maketh for the commendation of the Apostles doctrine that we despyse it not as an humane thying, and to be little esteemed, seeing it is manifest it was published among men, by the euident working of the holy ghost. But some men vse in this place to moue a graue question, why Paule was suffered in one place to teach, and forbidden in another. This question some men thinke is very commodiously soluted, if all such doings be referred vnto Gods prescience or foreknowledge. For they saye he foreseth who be worthy to haue his word, and to be saued, and who be not. But these kind of menne whyle they are carefull to defende the iustice of God, for feare of making him the authoz of any sinne, they make little of his grace, measuring saluation by the worthynesse of menne: which is impossible for them to doe, vnlesse they will also stablishe the merite of man, and the proude assistance in mannes righteousness. But howe frivulous and bayne a glose this is, appeareth by this, in that all men of themselves are vnworthy of saluation. For as Paule testifieth: All haue sinned, and are destitute of the glory of God, and there is not a iust man, no not one. And there is none worthy to receyue the worde of saluation, but such as God pleaseth to make worthy and meete. For of our selues we are not once able to thinke good, but all our worthynesse and abilitie to perceyue that that is good commeth of God. This saying of Christ is notable, and well knowne to all menne: No manne commeth to me, but he whome the father draweth. An example whereof we had in the .xiiij. Chapter, where it is sayde, they beleued, that were ordeyned vnto life euerlasting. And in the next Sermon we shall haue the example of Lydia, which therfore beleued Paule, bicause the Lord had opened hir hart. It remayneth therfore that there can be none other cause alleaged of this doing, but the franke and free election of God, which embraceth by his merce whome he pleaseth, and whome againe he lysteth, their harts he hardeneth. And yet no man must accuse God eyther of vnrighteousnesse or crueltie, forasmuch as he is bound to man, and so ordreth his iudgements, that great learning commeth thereby vnto vs. For in the elect he sheweth an example of his mere goodnesse, and in the reprobate the seneritie of his iustice, that we may learne to feare the one, and to embrace and kisse the other. Moreover, the vse of this doctrine serueth and is necessarye for many purposes. For it marueylously comforteth vs in temptations, bicause we knowe our saluation is not founded in our power, or in the merite of our righteousness, but in the grace of God, and merite of Christ. For who can ouerthrow this righteousness or grace? who shall separate those from the loue of God, whom he hath once embraced? Or who shall be able to take one sheepe out of Christes hande, seeing all power is giuen to him in heauen and in earth? Whosoever teach that saluation de-

2. Cor. 3.

Iohn. 6.

Rom. 8.

Iohn. 10.

pen-

pendeth vpon our worthinesse, doe vtterlye infringe the force and strength of this consolation. Besides; this doctrine teacheth vs our dutie, and to acknowledge the great goodnesse of God, when we perceyue our selues more sought after and visited by the worde of God, than others. For as God attributeth not this vnto our merites, but of his mere grace goeth about to saue vs: so if any disdain to acknowledge his goodnesse, and shewe themselves unkinde towardes him, he sheweth the horrible seueritie of his iustice agaynst them. We haue for example, Corozaim, Bethsaida, Capernaum, and the whole Nation of the Jewes, which we reade God cast of for none other cause, but for that they would not acknowledge the day of their visitation. Examples of like seueritie are those Cities, which God did boughsafe to illuminate by the ministerie of Paule more than other. For we see they are at this day tyrannously oppressed by the Turkes, because they shewed not themselves so thankfull vnto God, as they ought. Lette vs beseech you, thinke hereof, whome it hath pleased God these many yeares to let enjoy the preaching of the Gospell, and to let vs abounde in the quiet and peace thereof, where a number beside feele great want therof, and being famined, would be glad of one little morsell of Euangelike consolation.

But let vs returne to Paule and his companions, who though they be forbidden in one place to preach, yet cease not from doing their dutie, but passing through Misia, come at length to Aeolis, and to a Citie in the same Countrey, called Troas, earnestly seeking euerywhere, occasion to preach. And there Paule being admonished by oracle, vnderstandeth he must go into Macedonia. For there appeareth vnto him a Macedonian, which undoubtedly was nothing but an Angell, and desireth to haue his countrey holpen. And here came diuers thinges very profytable for vs to consider. first is the example of Paule, whereby we are taught, that we must not be slacke in doing our office and dutie, although our enterpryse succede not at the fyrst or seconde attempt, as we desire. For we reade the like came to passe many times both to the Prophetes and the Apostles, which followed their calling the more earnestlye, the more impedimentes they perceyued were layde in their waye. Let all men go forward after these mennes examples, and God will assist their endeouours, who bseth when he seeth time and place to giue occasion of onset, and also prosperous successe. Furthermore, this place sheweth vs a singuler example of Gods goodnesse, whereby it cometh to passe, that God worketh our saluation, when we least knowe or thinke of it. For who among the Macedonians, would you thinke, thought eyther of Paule, or of the waye of saluation, who when he came, had none but a fewe of women to followe him and heare him: So by this meane is the saying of the Prophete fulfilled: I am founde of them that sought me not, and haue appeared to them that asked not after mee. And that that Luke sayth came to passe here among them of Macedonia, the same may be seene in all other that eyther haue attained, or at this day do attayne vnto saluation. For before this worlde was made, Paule sayth we were elected in Christ. And our fyrst parent Adam when he was fallen in sinne, and did not onely not seeke God, but fled from him, yet was he both sought of God and called, and receyued the free promise of saluation. Hereto appertayneth it that men in the Scriptures are compared vnto sheepe, which hauing once strayed from the flocke, neuer returne, vnlesse the shepheard

Luke. 9. 10.

Paule is called to go into Macedonia.

Esay. 65.

Ephes. 1.

Genes. 3.

by

Esay. 53.
Luke. 15.

Galat. 1.

Esay. 60.
Paulus pass
sage into
Macedonia.

Luke. 9.

by his diligence sette them agayne. But Christ is our shephearde, which bleseth to seeke his sheepe in valleyes and mountaynes, and when he hath founde him, layeth him on his shoulder and bringeth him home. And this care of God may not onely be perceyued in those thinges that concerne the saluation of our soules, but also sheweth it selfe in the thinges seruing to the vse and maintenance of our bodies. For as God feedeth our bodye bountifullly, in giuing vs a living out of the earth: so hath he appoynted the Angels to be our tutors and keepers, which tarie rounde about them that feare him, and deliuer them. But bicause we haue hereof intreated heretofore, let this nowe suffice. Yet let vs marke the vse of his doctrine, which consisteth chiefly in this poynt, that we shoulde be thankfull vnto God, and stryue in all kinde of aduersities to defende our calling, by the inuincible hope and assistance of Gods ayde and succor. Furthermore, this example commendeth vnto vs the dignitie of the Gospell, and the ministry thereof. For first this is a notable thing, that Paule is called by an Angell, and by the Oracle of God to preache. So Peter was admonished by a vision from heauen, to preache vnto Cornelius, and to the Gentyles, and the spirite led Philip to teach the Aethiopian his saluation. Therefore some menne doe very vaine-ly to contemne the ministerie of man, as a thing of small or none account, and requyre to haue Angels to teach them, seeing Angels sende vs vnto men to be taught. Yea, Paule will not haue vs to beleue an Angell, if he teach anye thing disagreeing from the doctrine of the Apostles. Also the wordes of the Angell commend the dignitie of the Ministerie. For he sayth, Come into Macedonia, and helpe vs. Yet is it in Gods power onely to helpe vs both in body and soule. But bicause the worde of the Gospell, is the power of saluation to all that beleue it, the Ministers thereof are therefore not without a cause sayd, to helpe men and to saue them. And for this cause Abdias prophesying of the kingdome of Christ, calleth the Apostles Saviours. Therefore the temeritie and impietie of those, which saye that the Gospell causeth troubles and disquietnesse, is reprovued, seeing it is euident that men cannot chouse but perishe, except they be called by the preaching of Christ into the way of saluation, according to the saying of the Prophete: The Nation and kingdome that serueth not thee shall perishe.

But what doth Paule, when he heareth he is called of God into Macedonia, to men vnkowne, and into Europe another part of the worlde? Doth he trespasse and make delayes, bicause he was before once or twyse forbidden? No, yea, he prepareth him to the voyage, and frameth him altogether vnto Gods calling, and at length with a straght course commeth to Philippie, a very notable Citie and state. By which example we are taught that nothing is rashly to be taken in hand without Gods calling, but when we are certaine thereof, then wyth speede to doe that the Lorde commaundeth. For he so little regardeth prolongers and delayers, that he cannot abyde pretence of godlynesse, if vnder colour thereof, we neglect our vocation, as we are taught by the example of him, which was not suffered to go burie his father, after Christ had called him to the ministry of the worde. But this is the most commodious way, to doe well, if we haue a diligent regarde to the calling of God, and followe the same faithfully and earnestly. For they that trust their owne deuises, and seeke after vanitie as Dauid sayth, cannot chouse but grievously offende. God graunt that we be all

mindefull

mindefull hereof, and followe our vocation, that after we haue on earth fulfilled our duetie, we maye at length lyue in heauen with Iesus Christ our Saviour: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glorie, for ever. Amen.

The. Cviij. Homelie.

WE were in that Citie abiding certaine dayes, and on the Sabbath dayes we went out of the Citie besides a riuer, where men were wont to pray. And we sat downe and spake vnto the women which resorted thither. And a certaine woman named Lydia, a seller of purple of the Citie of Thyatira, which worshipped God, gaue vs audience, whose heart the Lorde opened, that shee attended vnto the things that Paule spake. When she was baptized, and hir housholde, she besought vs saying: If ye thinke that I beleue on the Lorde come into my house and abyde there. And she constreyned vs.



The Apostle Paule being called of God by the Aungell, passed into Macedonia, to preach the Gospell vnto the men of that countrie. By which example is proued partly the dignitie of the Gospell, and partly that saluation that is giuen vs of mere fauour and grace is declared. For if we consider the Macedonians, they were in the same case and condicion that other Nations were, which Paule otherwheres way-

teth, were subiect vnto the power of darkenesse, were Idolaters, were the seruants of sinne, and therefore boyde of God. Besides that, God sendeth Paule now to teach them the waye of saluation, when they once thinke not thereof. But let vs see what he did at Philippi, the chiefest citie of Macedonia.

Wee were (sayth Luke) in that Citie abyding certaine dayes. The cause of this abode (as maye be gathered by all circumstances) was for that the Apostles sawe no oportunitie to preache, which thing they chiefly wayted for. Wherefore at length they sought the same out of the Citie. For they went out of the Citie on the Sabbath day, and preached the Gospell to certaine women, nigh vnto a certaine Riuer, whither they vsed of custome to resort vnto publike prayer. This is a verie notable example, teaching vs howe God bleseth to trye and exercise the fayth and constancie of his seruantes. For as it hath bene declared, the Apostle was called by the Aungell, as one speaking in the behalfe of all the countrie, and desiring helpe. Wherefore a man might haue hoped that the Macedonians should haue receyued Paule when he had come, with all kinde of alacritie, and declaration of ioy, and that euery mans minde had bene prepared to receyue the light of the Gospell. But this hope so deceyueth them, that in a moste famous and populous Citie, there is not one that giueth eare vnto them, neyther can they espie any occasion to make a sermon, notwithstanding they narrowly wayted for the same. And without the Citie, women only gaue eare vnto them, and but one of them all, that beleued the worde, one Lydia which was a stranger. Who therefore woulde not thinke this calling of Paule to haue bene a mockery, seeing no effect to followe of the same? But God bleseth to laye many stoppes in the way of them that walke in his calling, whereby to hinder

Paule preaches
at Philippi

hinder and pull them backe, to proue their fayth, to trayne them vnto constancie, and to teach them to wastle and overcome aduersitie. So Moses being sent to deliuer the people, fyndeth many impedimentes layde in his waye, which seemed much repugnaunt to the will and appoyntment of God. For the Angell of the Lorde threatheth him with death, bicause he neglected the Circumcising of his sonne, and he fyndeth Pharaon not onely set and bent against his requestes, but also the chyl dren of Israel murmur and rebell against him: And when he was out of Egypt, the sea laye in his waye before him, so that nature hir selfe seemed to fyght against him, but his constancie of fayth and stedfast purpose to fulfill the commaundementes of God, ouercame all these aduersities. So that cruell enimie Saule tyeth vp against Dauid being called and appointed to be king, by whose tyrannie or euer he came to the kingdome, he was expelled his countrie. And manye such like thinges came dayly to passe, whereby God bleseth to trye our fayth. But it is our dutie constantly to holde on, and with sure hope to wayte for the assistance of God, and so we shall fynde he will neyther fayle of his promises, nor want to further our enterprises.

Furthermore, we haue a marueylous example of conuersion set forth in Lydia, which by reason of the manifold doctrine therof, the Euangelist most diligently describeth with all circumstances. And beginning with the description of the person, he sayth there was a woman, to admonish vs of that sere or kinde, by the which sinne entred into the worlde. By hir condicion and calling she was a seller of purple, and exercised a kinde of merchandise serving more to the maintenance of pompe and pride, than vnto necessitie: to saye nothing of couetousnesse, craft, and deceyte, and such like vices as this kinde of people are commonly giuen vnto. Besides, she was a straunger borne at Thyatira a Citie of Lydia. These thinges are declared to the ende that we might knowe howe God bleseth to despyse no state or degree of men, but of al sorts fauoreth & embraceth those that are desirous to conuert & turne vnto him. Infynite other examples of lyke kinde there are, which teach vs the same. For Christ in manye places reasoneth with harlots, about their saluation. In other places agayne he openeth the kingdome of heauen vnto Publicanes. He despyed not the order of Pharisees, seeing he admitted Nicodemus to talke with him in the night season, and molle friendly instructed him. Yea, he did lighten the Centurion which was appoynted to see him executed, with the knowledge of him. These places teach vs that we shoulde not despayre of Gods grace, by reason of the trade or kynde of lyfe that we haue heretofore ledde. For it is euident, that the doore of saluation standeth open to euery man which vnfaynedly desireth it. In this example also appeareth the counsell of God, which of little beginnings promoteth the kingdome of his sonne. For he appoynteth Lydia to be the fyrst frutes of that Church, whose fayth afterwarde Paule thinketh he coule neuer sufficiently commend. So Christ chose out from among fischeres and Publicanes his chiefe Disciples. And we must not thinke it is without a cause that Christes kingdome here on earth touching the outward sight, is of no reputation, and a despyed thing. For hereof we may gather, that it is not of this worlde, nor that we must seeke the thinges of this worlde in the same. It is also euident that they which desire to be partakers with Christ, must not glozy in the wisdom of the fleshe, in nobilitie,

Lydia is an
example of
true conuer-
sion.

John. 4.
Luke. 7.
Math. 9.
Luke. 19.

Math. 27.

litie, in pompe, and other such like things, but only in the Lorde, as Paule hath taught at large in the fyrst Epistle to the Corinthians the fyrst Chap. Here hast thou what to aunswere those, which rayle at the doctrine and fayth of the Gospell, bicause none holde with the same, but the Communal- tie, and men of small or no reputation, vsing the same argument, that the Phariseyes and Scribes sometime vsed against their seruants, which commended Christes doctrine. Why rather harken they not what Christ sayth: I thanke thee o father, bicause thou hast hidden these things from the wyse and prudent, and hast shewed them vnto Babes. Verilye father, euen so was it thy good pleasure.

But after he had described the person of Lydia, he declareth the order and maner of hir conuersion. In the which fyrst she is sayd to be religious, and to feare God, as diuers other did, both among the Jewes and Gentyles, which yet were ignoraunt in the way of true religion, and saluation, and therefore the more zelouslye they defended superstition, the more egerly they resisted the truth, yet in the meane tyme this is needefull in saluation, that mennes mindes shoulde not be boyde of the feare of God, but enclined to embrace the truth, and desirous of true religion. For except the ground be good, the sæde of the worde can not well growe in it. And yet this is not so to be vnderstanded, as though this promptnesse and towardnesse came of our selfe. For of our selues we are not able to thinke well, and the inuentions of man are naught, euen from his childehode, as God testifieth. It is therefore the gift and worke of God, if men be giuen vnto the desire and loue of religion and the truth, which otherwyse by reason of naturall corruption, they abhorre in their heartes. Next, Lydia hearde Pauls teaching. Therefore she bleth that meane and instrument, whereby God bleth to giue and stirre by fayth in vs. For fayth cometh by hearing, and hearing by the worde of God. Therefore whosoever will profyte in the knowledge of saluation must labour to haue fayth, and we must not regard those that seeke new reuelations. For God speaketh to vs in the scriptures, which who so refuse to heare, are commonly praies for the deuill, which miserably deludeth the deceyued with lying reuelations. Last of all, it is sayd, that God opened the heart of Lydia, to giue hæde vnto the things that Paule spake. For without this in vaine is the worde eyther preached or hearde, whereof bicause we haue already oftentimes spoken, it seemeth not now needefull to saye any more. And if any man aske why God did not open the harts of others aswell, to him we say with Paule: o man what art thou that disputest with God? who hath first giuen vnto God, and it shall be giuen to him againe? For it becommeth vs not ouer curiouslye to searche out the priue counsayles of God, but in them to reuerence his great goodnesse, iustice, veritie, and wisdom. It is our part by this place to learne the order of true conuersion, which chiefly consisteth in these thre pointes, to haue a loue in our hartes vnto religion, to heare the worde, and to be illuminated with the spirite of God.

It remaineth for vs to consider the effectes of true fayth, which shewed themselves in Lydia. Fyrst, she is baptized according to the commaundement of Christ, and custome of the Church. By baptisme he comprehendeth the confession of fayth, wherby she renounced hir olde superstition, and professed to followe Christ, desiring to be accounted among the members of

Iohn. 7.

Math. 11.
Luke. 10.The order
and maner of
conuersion.

Luke. 8.

Roma. 10.

The effectes
of conuersion
and true
fayth.

Deut. 6.
Psal. 78.

his Church. We are by this example also admonished, that the godly must not contemne the sacramentes, but vse them reuerently, both for that they knowe they are instituted by Christ, and also for that they are glad to haue the benefyte of saluation, whereof Christ is the authoꝝ, by them sealed and confyrmēd. But Lydia not content with hir owne baptisme, causeth hir whole household and familie likewise to be baptized. This is the property of all the faythfull, that they desire all men to be partakers of saluation wyth them, but speciallly those which they knewe God hath committed to their charge. And this they doe not of priuate affection, but following the commaundement of God, whose will it is alwaye that we shall consecrate and dedicate vnto him, all our people. So Abraham circumcised not onely himselfe, but all the men in his familie according to Gods commaundement. And in the lawe householders are commaunded to instruct their familie in the commaundements of God. And that which was commaunded them, Magistrates must thinke belongeth to them also, and labour to take away superstitiousnesse, and to plant the desire of true religion among the people, as we reade those godly Kinges Dauid, Asa, Iosaphat, Ezechias, Iosias, and such like diligently did. And doubtlesse it is not without the great suspicion of impietie, that one shoulde so rule ouer others, to bereue God of his right, which claymeth all men to himselfe. Finally, Lydia biddeth the Apostles home to hir house, and offereth them lodging with great instance, saying: If you thinke that I beleue on the Lord, come home to my house, and abyde there. Which wordes haue in them such kinde of obtestation that the Apostles might not refuse the friendship offered, except they would both condemne hir, and thinke hir vnwoꝝthy the name of a Christian. Although at the fyrst, after a ciuill sorte, they refuse to come home to hir house, both for that they woulde not be thought lyke deceyuers, to abuse the simplicitie of women, and to gape after their goodes, and also for that Paule would neuer burthen any, as he many times testifyeth. 1. Cor. 9. 2. Thes. 3. Howbeit, Lydia by hir intreatie vttereth a minde inflamed with charitie, and vnfearefull constancie. For it is a poynt of charitie, in that she is desirous to take them into hir house, and to giue them their boꝝde, of whome she had receyued and drauene the doctrine of saluation. Agayne, it is a token of a valiant courage, that being a straunger, she durst receyue teachers of a newe doctrine into hir house, which she well knewe she might not doe without daunger. But this is the propertie of faith, that it neyther feareth body nor goodes, so that the glory of Christ may be enlarged. Let them I pray you, looke on the example of this woman, which now a dayes boaste of their fayth, and they shall streyght perceyue howe wyde they are from the propertie of fayth. Let vs therefore praye vnto God, that he will bouchsafe to open our harts, that we being instructed in true fayth, may expresse Christ in our whole life, and liue with him in heauen: to whome be prayse, honoꝝ, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The. Cix. Homelie.

AND it came to passe as we went to prayer, a certaine Damosell possessed with a spirite, that prophcyed mette vs, which brought hir maister and my-
stresse

stresse much vauntage with prophesying. The same followed Paule and vs, and cryed saying: These men are the seruants of the most high God, which shewe vnto vs the way of saluation. And this did she many dayes. But Paule not content, turned about and sayde to the spirite, I commaunde thee in the name of Iesu Christ, that thou come out of hir. And hee came out the same houre.



Although Iesus Christ the Sonne of God by the merite of his death, hath so ouerthrowne the kingdome of the Deuill, that he hath no more power agaynst the kingdome of Christ, yet ceaseth he not, according to his auncient blage, still to assault the same: and as Christ intermitted nothing belonging to the redemption of mankind: so Satan for his part leaueth nothing vnassayd, to pull men from Christ their sauour, and from the way of saluation.

An euident example hercof is declared in this present hystorie. For after Paule was come vnto the Philippians, Lydia the selier of Purple, conuerted vnto the fayth by his preaching, beganne to declare the singular frutes of fayth. For shewing hir dutie of thankfulness vnto the Apostles, she requested them home to hir house, and lodged them. By which occasion it came to passe, that the Apostles proceeding earnestly in their office, daylye wanne more and more Disciples, and so beganne a Church together, as shall appeare in the ende of the Chapter. But Satan thinking this geare intollerable, assayeth to resist these fyrst principles and beginnings of Christes kingdome. And fyrst he handleth the matter with subtiltie, and guilefull flattery, and by and by, when his fyrst enterprise succedeth not, he setteth vpon the Apostles by open force, and at length dryueth them out of the Citie. But at this tyme we will examine but the fyrst encounter.

Luke beginneth his hystorie with the description of that person, whose helpe Satan vsed in this conflict. This was a mayde or damozell possessed with the spirite of Python, which by hir prophesying, was very gaynefull vnto hir maister and mystress. Nowe thys spirite of Python the Gentyles supposed to be Apollo, who had that name giuen him (as the Poets feigne) of that Serpent Python which he slewe wyth his bowe and arrowes. And that Apollo was the President of prophesying, is more manifest than needeth by many wordes to be proued. For Delphi, Claros, Delus, and diuers other places, where vnder the name of Apollo the deuill sometime vsed to utter hys Oracles, were very notable and famous. He likewise inspyred certayne priuate persons, striking them sodainly madde, and making them speake ambigious and doubtfull sayings, which superstitious men receyued and embraced for credible Oracles. And at length the matter came to this passe, that foolish men woulde enterprise or take nothing in hand, vnlesse they had fyrst consulted with these Prophets, and in all their distresses they woulde runne to these Oracles, whereby it came to passe that great aduantage followed. Bicause man is of this nature, that he will let for no labour nor cost about those things which may any kinde of way satisfie his curiositie. And Satan rayseth vppon an instrument hereof among the Philippians, agaynst the Apostles, to the intent eyther to make the wiser sort

A Maide possessed with a spirite, is an instrument of the Deuill.

Exo. 7. 8.

Roma. 1.

2. Thel. 2.

Satan beareth witness

suspect them, or else the rude and unskillfull Commons to hate them. In the meane whyle we maye consider with what engines Satan maintayneth hys kingdome amongst men: namely, by lying, and curious and soothsaying Artes, wherein he counterfeyteth the spirite of Prophecie, to drawe men by that meanes from the worde of God, which ought to be the onely rule in all our doyngs. The Professors of these Artes in Egypt, were the Magitians, whych the Scripture sayeth wythstode Moses. Among these may Baalam also be numbred, although he did egregiously counterfeyte a loue of the truth. Such were diuers and many sorts of Prophetes among the Chanaanites, whome God by his lawe commaunded to be destroyed. Unto the which maye be referred the Augures Aruspices, and interpreters of dreames, Astrologers, Necromancers, Geomancers, Hydromancers, and infynite others, whose counsayles and sayings were of great authoritie among Kings and Magistrates, in the administration and gouernance of their kingdomes and common weales. And surelye if we consider the thing well, Satan scarcely exercised the power of his kingdome in anye other thyng more, than in this vanitie of Oracles, wherewith he bewitched all the worlde a great number of yeres. And in these dayes he many times rayseth by certayne Prophetes, which eyther make themselfe cunning in the knowledge of thinges to come, or else can put awaye diseases by enchantments, and assaye to doe diuers other things, impossible for man to perfourme. But some will demaunde wherefore God in times past suffred and yet to this day suffreth these things to be done. The answer is readye. For where the Gentyles in tymes past were not contented with the reuelations of God, but went about to fynde out the mysteries of Gods maiestie, by the pregnancie of their owne wit, this presumption of theirs deserued, that they shoulde be gyuen bype into a reprobate sense, and miserably seduced wyth the wyles and gynnys of the Deuill. Paule gaue vs warning that the same shoulde come to passe towarde the later dayes, saying that Antichrist shoulde haue power on them which would not embrace the truth, offred of God. And if a manne consider the Philippians, he shall fynde they were worthy to be thus seduced by this Demoniacke Damself. For such was their liberalitie towards hir, that hir Master and Dame had no small aduantage by hir. But yet they so little regarde the Apostles of Christ, that they had wanted harbour, vnlesse Lydia which also was a forrenner, had taken them into hir house. The like vnthankfulness & peruersitie is in these dayes. For men will not embrace the light of the truth, and where they bestowe much cost vpon dumbe ymages, deceyuing Priestes, Coniurers, Inchauntes, Soothsayers, and wise folke (as they call them) euery thing seemeth to much that they bestow on the doctrine of truth. They are worthy therefore to be a pray for Satan, by whose subtiltie they may perceyue both their goods to be consumed, and their bodies troubled and molested. Let vs therefore learne to harken vnto the lawe of God, which teacheth vs to take hede and beware of all such kindes of deceyuers, and commaundeth vs onely to studie and follooe the worde of God. See Deut. 18. Leuit. 20. Esaye. 8. And they that will not thus doe, let them learne by the example of Saule, what to looke for. See. 1. Sam. 28.

But now it is time to marke what Satan did by this Damself. She folloving the Apostles, which of custome resorted to the prayers, cried out saying:

saying : These men are the seruantes of the most high God, which shewe vnto vs the waye of saluation. What kinde of thing (sayest thou) is this that I heare : Is this the saying of the Deuill, withstanding the Apostles : Yea, verily. Why : he coulde not saye any more in their commendation, than to confesse them to be the seruantes of God, and the preachers of saluation. Howbeit, it behoueth vs not so much to consider the wordes, as the pretence and meaning of the Deuill, by whose suggestion these wordes were spoken. For so shall thou perceyue that he most craftily vndermineth Christes cause, where he seemeth most to holde with the same. For here in this place, he beareth witnesse vnto the Apostles doctrine, to make it with the wiser sort (specially with the Jewes, if anye were present) to be suspected. For Satan knoweth he is accounted a lyer amongest all menne. For this cause he crieth that the Apostles are the seruantes of God, and messengers of saluation, to make them the rather to be suspected with wise men. Furthermore he seeketh to make those that beleue the Apostles, to beleue also his answeres, wherby they heard the Apostles doctrine commended. But the faith in Christ cannot stande, where ought is attributed vnto the deuill, whose kingdome Christ came into this worlde to destroye. Therefore vnder the pretence of Christ, he seeketh priuily to crape into them, and to draw them which began to beleue in Christ, by little and little from him. Besides this, he thought to tickle the Apostles mindes, with ambition and desire of bayne glory, to thende that being herewith entyled, they might neglect the glory of God. You see therfore what poyson lyeth hid vnder the bayte of this honorable and holye acclamation. With this intent we reade he flattered Christ also, and bare recorde of him. Let vs here marke the sleight of Satan, which can marueylously dissemble his hatred of the truth, and transforme himselfe into an Angell of light. Therefore lette vs suspect whatsoeuer cometh from him. Neyther let vs beleue his instrumentes, although they speake neuer so grauely and honorably in the commendation of Gods seruantes, and haue the holy scriptures neuer so ryfe in their mouth. This place serueth to refute them which say we are vniuersally offended with the Papacie, bicause therein the name of Christ is preached, the commendation of Saints are celebrated, the lessons of holye scripture are daily vsed, and nothing is done without the inuocation of Gods holy name. But these men are ignoraunt how Antichristes sea or chayre must stande in the Church, and marke not this saying of Christ, Not euery one that sayth vnto me Lorde, Lorde. &c. And if we woulde looke nearer on the matter, it shall appeare that they seeke nothing vnder the pretence of religion, and Christ his Church, and his reuerende name, but to establishe their tyrannie, and to bring mennes traditions in credite. Also by this place are they confuted, that holde with Coniurers, enchaunters, or soothsayers, bicause they heare them mutter out the reuerent names of God, and weighty sentences of scripture. But what marueyle is this, since the Deuill durst alleage scriptures against our Maister Christ : yea, they sinne the more grievously, bicause they colour their impietie with the name of God, the abuse and prophanation whereof, he will not leaue unpunished.

Nowe what Pauls opinion was touching all these pointes, this present example declareth. He for a time beareth with this Maide, testifying this truth of them, wayting for some suggestion of the holy spirite, bicause

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vnto the
truth.

Marc. 1.
Luke. 4.

Math. 7.

Satan by the
name of christ
is expelled.

he woulde not offende through blinde and ouerhastie affection, at length inflamed with an holpe zeale and indignation, he rebuketh the Mayde thus crying, and in the name of Christ expelleth the spirite. Which example although it serue for the instruction of all men, yet chiefly it teacheth the Ministers of the worde their dutie, who must haue so great a care of the truth, that they shoulde suffer nothing, which by any meanes maye derogate any thing from the same, although it made greatly for their prayse and gloze. For (as we declared before) Satan bseth by flatterie, to set on such, as he knoweth are other wayes inuincible. For the which cause Christ forbade the euill spirites to speake, and woulde receyue no commendation at their mouthes. Wherefore they are greatly deceyued that vse to dally with those whome they knowe are altogether straungers from the truth. They hide many times their poison, but the more they flatter, the sozer they hurt. It is the part of a christian man to take none for his friende, whom he knoweth to be Christes enimie, and cannot abyde the doctrine of Christ. But this is very worthye to be considered, that Paule setteth Jesus Christ agaynst the Deuill, and that he is constrayned to depart as soone as he heareth the name of Christ pronounced. This is an vnspcakable argument of the power of Christ. For none can enter the house of a mightie man, and ryfle him of his goodes, except he fyrst binde him. But Jesus Christ coming into the world, hath so vanquished the Deuill the Prince thereof, that if he heare but the name of Christ onely, he is constrayned to leaue his possession in men, and to giue place vnto Christ. Therefore we must needes confesse that the power of Christ is much greater than the power of the deuill. And of this we must fet comfort in our temptations, that we feare not him, who hath no power or force agaynst Christ, in whom we are graffed through fayth. Agayne, we are by this place taught, that Christ hath nothing to doe with the deuill, saying he doth not vouchsafe to receyue of him any testimonie, be it neuer so honorable. For what societie or communion can be betwene them, seeing according to the fyrst promyse, Christ came into the world to breake or crush the Deuils head, and to destroy his works: This also admonisheth Christians of their dutie, that they shoulde haue nothing to doe with the deuill. For it is not meete for them that haue professed Christ, to dallye with the Deuill in any poynt. Let them therefore flye these soothsaying Artes, which the craft of the Deuill, and curiositie of man hath inuented. Let them flye the iuglings of enchauntmentes, whereby he promyseth men helpe in their diseases, or in their other distresses. Let them flye false and prophane worshippinges, Idolatrye, superstition, and whatsoeuer else plucketh vs from God. Let them hate the tyrannie of sinne, whereby the libertie that Christ hath purchased vs, is lost. Let them watch constantly in the fayth, and resist the Deuill, and he shall depart from them: whereby it shall come to passe, that we hauing shaken of his yoke, shall here leade a life acceptable vnto God, and shall hereafter liue and reygne in heauen with our Lorde and saviour Jesus Christ: to whom be prayse, honoz, power, and gloze, for euer. Amen.

Gene. 3.
1. Iohn. 3.

The. Cx. Homelie.

AND when hir Mayster and Myfresse sawe that the hope of their gaine was gone, they caught Paule and Syllas, and drewe them into the market place

place vnto the Rulers, and brought them to the Officers, saying: These men trouble our Citie, seeing they are Iewes, and preache ordinaunces which are not lawfull for vs to receyue, neyther to obserue, seeing wee are Romaines. And the people ranne against them, and the officers rent their clothes, and commaunded them to be beaten with rods. And when they had beaten them fore, they cast them into prison, commaunding the Iayler of the prison to kepe them diligently. Which when he had receyued such commaundement, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feete fast in the stockes.



As the Deuill, partly with flatterie and deceyte, and partly by open force withstode Iesus Christ, while he liued here on earth, and preached the Gospell, euen so he bseth the same weapons against the Apostles of Christ at this daye, that in tymes past he bset. This maye we see in this present hystorie. For agaynst Paule preaching amonge the Philippians, he setteth a Damsell possessed with the spirite of the Deuill, by whome he giueth a notable testimonie of the truth vnto Paule, meaning this way to bring the doctrine of the Gospell in suspition with wise men, and to get himselfe some rowme among the professors of christian faith. But the Apostle Paule quickly smelleth his subtiltie, and compelleth the spirite being adiuured by the name of Christ, to come out of þe maid, teaching vs by this example that there ought to be no fellowship betwixt the deuill & Christ and his seruantes, forasmuch as Christ came into this world, to destroy the works of the deuill. But for al this the deuill leaueth not his tackle, but rather, seeing by flattery, he cannot preuaile, being stricken in a great rage, professeth extreme enmity against Paule, by the master and mistresse of the mayden, and proceedeth so farre in the matter, that he fyrst causeth the Apostles to be beaten with rodde, and to be put in prison, and at length to be thrust out of the Citie. This place is woorthy to be singularly considered, bicause it setteth forth to vs, to beholde, as it were in a glasse, the craftes and enterprises of our common enimie.

But chiefly Luke declareth what cause incensed the Maisters of this Mayde agaynst the Apostles. They perceyued (sayth he) when this prophesying spirite was driuen out that the hope of their gayne was gone. Couetousnesse therefore was the chiefe cause of this adoe, which did not onely dazell their eyes, that they coulde not see the truth, but did also so set them on fyre, that they coulde not but with deadly hatred persecute the same. This is an example very notable, teaching vs what a mischieuous euill couetousnesse is. Paule calleth it the roote of all euill. And the scripture in another place teacheth vs that there is nothing moze wicked than a couetous man. There are also euerywhere examples which proue, that lawe and right is corrupted, throught couetousnesse, good maners infected, the honestie of Maydens and Matrones assaulted, amities and friendship broken, and fynally most flourishing common weales ouerturned. But the force and infection of this euill, is nowhere moze evidently espyed, than in matters of religion. For couetousnesse drawing the minde of man from God, maketh them Idolaters, which ought to put all their hope and trust in God onely. For,

Couetousnesse commonly incenseth Christs enimies.

1. Tim. 6.
Eccles. 10.

where

Math. 6.

2. Pet. 2.

Iohn. 11.

Iohn. 12.

where our treasure is, there is also our hart. The treasure of a couetous man is in his goodes, and heapes of money. Therefore the couetous mannes minde must needes be tyed thereto. Therfore it is euident, there can be no religion, wheresoeuer couetousnesse once beareth rule. For y^e which cause, Paule doubted not to call couetousnesse, Idolatrie. Coloss. 3. Ephe. 5. And when couetous men brag of religion, they vse religion but for their gaine also, and the more holy a pretence they sette vpon their couetousnesse, the more they offende. So through the couetousnesse of the Jewische Priestes, it came to passe, that the Temple of the Lorde was made a fayer or market, and vnder the pretence of long prayers, the houses of the widdowes and fatherlesse were deuoured. And the Apostles chiefly attribute this vnto the deceyuers of the later dayes, that they shall denie the Lorde that redeemed them, and make money and merchandise of his members. Which Oracle if a man woulde compare with the blage of our dayes, he shoulde confesse that Peter had hyt the nayle on the heade, for that now these many yeares all things haue bene solde in the Popedome for money. Yea, this only thing may we thanke for all the traditions of men, for so many orders of Monkes, such confusion of ceremonies, Diriges, and whatsoeuer such like. But besides all these thinges there is one much more grievous matter, namely, that this couetousnesse maketh menne they cannot abyde the truth, and the enemies thereof. For although couetous men can abyde many other thinges, yet they cannot suffer their aduantage to decay, nay they will waxe starke madde, if a man take away the occasion thereof. Of this spring such wicked consultations against the truth, treasons, tumults, & all kinde of persecutions. Examples to proue the same are euerywhere to be found. Caiaphas blinded with couetousnesse caused Christ to be killed. Iudas moued with couetousnesse betrayed him. And the maister and mystresse of this Damsell wished the Apostles out of the way, for no cause so much as for that their doctrine hindered their gayning. They coulde abyde that Lydia was conuerted vnto Christ, that the Apostles were lodged in hir house, that they preached vnto them that assembled together by the water side, and brought euery day newe Disciples vnto Christ. But they cannot abyde to haue their gaine turned away. The very like we shall see a little hereafter in Demetrius among the Ephesians. But what stande we in rehearsall of olde examles, seeing in our dayes couetousnesse onely doth chiefly hinder and stoppe the course of truth? The Bishops of Rome blinded with desire of lucre, fye all kinde of reformation. The same bindeth Princes and the Nobilitie vnto Antichrist, in that they perceyue the Popes and Bishops may maintayne many of their kinsfolke, with Ecclesiasticall goodes and liuings, which otherwise might go for rascalles, and be fayne to labour and toyle with their handes. The same maketh merchauntes, customers, soul-diours, and all states of men offended with the Gospell, bicause they see that if the Gospell be receyued, such trades of waxing rich, as many occupie in these dayes, cannot stande. What shall we say of the Gospellers? Doe not they runne chiefly vpon this rocke, while vnder a cloake of the Gospell, they hunt for riches and honor? Of which hope if they be disappointed, they become open enemies of the truth, being of the same minde that we saw before Simon Magus was of. Let vs therefore fye this hideous monster, and being content with our state, thinke nothing better than the knowledge of the

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the truth of the Gospell, which onely is able to make vs partakers of euerlasting saluation.

But let vs returne to this Damselfs Master and Dame, and see what they did against the Apostles. First, they laye holde on Paule and Silas, as the chiefe authoꝝ of all this matter. When they had bounde them, they bring them into the market place, vnto the headboronghes of the Citie, after that, they deliuer them vnto the souldiours, which the Romanes had there put in garrison. Then they beginne an accusation against them, both byting and artificioꝝ: These men (say they) trouble our Citie, seeing they are Iewes, and preache ordinaunces, which are not lawfull for vs to receyue, neyther to obserue, seeing we are Romanes. They object therefore against them two most heynous crimes, seditious disturbance of the Citie, and seducing of the people. The later crime they amplifie, by reason of the Romaine lawes, whereby newe maners of worshippinges or religion, were forbidden: neyther was it lawfull to honoꝝ or worship any newe God, before the senate had allowed him for a God, as that auncient writer of the Church Tertullian, hath noted. Further, they eraggrate both the crimes, by circumstances of persons. For they gloꝝe in that they are Romanes, and therefore worthy to be defended, that they may liue in safetie according to the Romaine lawes. They call the Apostles Iewes, after an odious sort and wise, bicause the name of the Iewes was hated and enuyed of all men, in somuch that in Claudius dapes, they were all driuen out of Rome and Italie. And surely it might seme a grieuous attempt for Iewes, defamed persons, almost with all men, to prescribe lawes vnto the Romanes, the Lords & seignioꝝ of the whole world. And this accusation was of such force and effect, that all the people ranne vpon the Apostles, as it had bene to the quenching of some great fyre begun. Thou shalt in this place consider what the crafts of the enemies of the truth are. We heard how they were incensed & led with the desire of priuate lucre & aduantage. But bicause it was an vnhonest poynt to disturbe the whole citie for a fewes sake, they make of a priuate case, a publike, with marueylous arte and craft, so proceeding, as though they tooke the publike weales cause in hande. Thus we heare Caiaphas played the Rhetozician, when he sayde vnto the Scribes, consulting agaynst Christ: It is expedient for vs, that one man dye for the people, and not all the Nation perishe. And now a dapes, nothing is so common a thing as to set a pretence of common weale vpon priuate affections, when men desire the doctrine of truth to be banished. This craft they haue learned of their Captaine the Deuill, who we reade vled the same trickes euen from the beginning. For did he not this wayes entyce our fyrst parents to breake Gods commaundement, & so propose his matter, as though he had sought no whitte for his owne auayle, but was onely carefull for theirs. When he begonne also to dispute with Christ, he seemed to go about to cause Christ to declare his Godheade vnto the worlde, by some wonderfull and myraculous wise, and not to holde the worlde anye longer in suspence and doubt, what he was. For to this ende were his sayings, touching turning of stones into breade, and casting himselfe downe from the pinnacle of the Temple. We haue euerywhere examples of such sleighthes, the chiefe ende whereof is, to warne vs that we suffer not our selues to be circumuented, and beguiled, eyther with the craftes of the deuill himselfe, or of his mem-

The Apostles are accused of sedition & deceit.

Apolog. 5.

bers. This place also teacheth vs, with what crimes commonly the truth is charged in this worlde. Namely, that he troubleth and disquieteth common weales, and beguyleth the simple Commons with new and false religion. Hereof cometh it to passe, that the Ministers and teachers of the truth, are counted for seditious fellowes, seducers, and beguilers. The faythfull seruantes of God, Moses and Aaron, are so called of Pharao the tyrant. For thus he aunswereth them, desiring him that the people myght be set at libertie: You Moses and Aaron, why pluck you the people away from their labour? But the wicked Achab more bitterly bybraydeth the Prophete Elias with the same, saying: Art not thou he that troublest Israel. Yet is that more grienous, that Amalias the Priest layeth to Amos the Prophetes charge, before king Ieroboam, in these wordes: Amos hath made a conspiracie against thee, in the middest of the house of Israel, and the lande cannot away with his sermons. Yea, the wicked Courtiers of Sedechias the king, accuse Ieremie of treason, and of flying to his enimies the Assirians, saying he is the onely authour of all their miseries and destruction. But this is no marueyle, considering these were the poynts of accusation that were layde vnto Christs charge. For the Priestes sayde vnto Pylate, wee founde this man peruertering the whole Nation, and forbidding to paye tribute vnto Caesar, saying he was Christ a king. Agayne: If thou let him loose, thou art not Caesars friend. Whosoeuer maketh himselfe a king, speaketh against Caesar. These are grienous matters, and argue the great impudencie of the worlde. And yet they may seeme tollerable being compared with the things done in our dayes. These thinges in tynes past did they saye, which were the professed enimies of the Prophetes and Apostles, and which knewe not that Christ was their sauour. But now adayes they that will be taken and counted for Christians, which challenge vnto them the chiefe gouernaunce of the Church, which professe themselves to be the nurses, shepheardes, and defenders of the Church, vse to persecute the ministers of Christ and his Gospel, and call that a newe doctrine, a seditious, and a deceptfull, which according to the scriptures of the olde and newe Testament, sheweth that all our saluation is onely in Christ Iesus, which teacheth vs, the right vse of the sacraments, innocencie and puritie of life, the duties of charitie, commaundeth vs to loue our enimies, leaueth lawes and priuiledges free vnto Magistrates, biddeth vs giue vnto Caesar that is Caesars, and vnto God, that belongeth vnto him, which commendeth vnto vs principally the desire of peace, and commaundeth vs asmuch as lyeth in vs, to haue peace with all men. Who may not therefore crie out, o maners, o tymes. Let vs therefore acknowledge the blindenesse of this world, and not esteeme their slanders one myte, whereby they go about to defame and bring in suspicion the wholesome doctrine of the Gospel.

The Apo-
stles are
scourged and
put in prison.

It remaineth for vs to consider what the iudgement of the Gouernour of Philippi was, concerning this present cause. But what saye I the iudgement, whereas without all iudgement, they raged like madde men against the Apostles: Streightways they tare and rent their garments, as though there wanted Ministers of such mischief. Then they commaunde them without hearing their aunswere, and being guiltlesse, to be beaten with rodde. And when they had bene well scourged, at length they cast them in prison, commaunding that they shoulde be well watched, as though they were

were worthe of more punishment than other malefactorz. Which thing was the cause that they were put in an inner prison, and their feet thrust into the stocks. But what more iniustice coulde Magistrates and men in office shewe? He offendeth that doth but denie him leaue that is accused, to excuse himselfe. But these men besides beate straungers with rodde, and when they haue beaten them, thrust them in prison, meaning afterwarde at leysure to heare their aunswere. The cause of this rage was, for that they suffered other that flattered them, to much to kindle their choler. Therfore let them that sitte in iudgement, flee this pestilent plague, and remember that they haue two eares giuen them for this cause, that one maye be kept open for the Plaintiffe, and that other for the defendant. Let them also remember that God is the President of iudgements, to whome they also shall one day giue an account of their iudgements. In the meane season we are admonished what the state of the godly is, in this worlde. Notorious malefactorz maye liue in safetie, but the godlye are hated and persecuted of all men, and where they hurt none, but doe good vnto all men, they haue least thanke of all men in the worlde. It was a singular benefite to deliuer the Damisell out of the thraldome of Satan. But for their good turne they are punished with stryppes and imprisonment, as publike enemies of the Citie. Hereof we haue euery day examples. But forasmuch as Christ once prophesied that these thinges shoulde come vnto vs, it is our partes not to be offended thereat, but with constant fayth and patience to hye vs vnto the marke appointed vs, that we may obtayne the rewarde promised to vs in Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.Cxj.Homelie.

AT midnight Paule and Syllas prayed, and lawded God. And the prisoners hearde them. And sodeinly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundation of the prison was shaken, and immediately all the dores opened, & euery mans bandes were loosed. When the keeper of the prison waked out of his sleepe, and saw the prison dores open, he drue out his sword, & would haue killed hymselfe, supposing that the prisoners had bene fledde. But Paule cryed with a lowde voyce, saying: Do thy selfe no harme, for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in and came trembling, and fell downe at the feete of Paule and Syllas, and brought them out, and sayde: Sirs, what must I doe to be saued? And they sayde, beleue on the Lorde Iesus, and thou shalt be saued, and thy housholde. And they preached vnto him the worde of the Lorde, and to all that were in his house.



S the holy scripture euerywhere doth teach the godly, that they must suffer persecutions in this worlde: so likewise it promiseth them Goddes abundant helpe and succour, and there want not examples, wherby God euen from the verry beginning of the worlde, hath declared the truth of his promises: such as are the examples conteyned in this booke. For before this, by his Aungell, he brought all the Apostles out of the prison, who as we hearde before had taught in the Temple. And

Peter being deliuered out of prison, defeated the cruell deuise of Herode, and of all the people gaping for his death. It is very notable also that your charitie euen now hearde recited. For here the faythfull Apostles of Christ, Paule and Silas are not onely deliuered out of prison, but also the keeper of the prison, a barbarous and cruell person, is deliuered out of the bandes of impietie, and being illuminated with the true knowledge of saluation, is conuerted vnto Christ. And bicause this hystorie maye many wayes serue both for our instruction and consolation, it shall be very profytable to examine all the circumstances thereof. Let vs see therefore what God and the Apostles doe in this case, which thing being considered, then we will also intreate of the Iaylers conuersion.

The Apo-
stles being
whipped and
put in bonds
praise and
prayer vnto
God.

Roma 5.

Luke. 22.

2. Tim. 2.
Roma. 8.

Psal. 50.

We haue hearde howe Paule and Silas were verie euill intreated, and beaten with rodde, and at length put in the stockes. Wherefore some might thinke they shoulde like puling women bewaile their mishappe, and euery honre complayne of Gods iustice. But Luke reporteth they were farre otherwise occupied. For he wyrteth that at midnight they made their prayers vnto God, and magnified him, and that not in any soft and secrete wyse, but so lowde, that the prisoners in the farther prison might easilie heare them. This was an argument both of a constant fayth, and merie conscience, which can be found in none other kinde of men, but in the faithfull onely, in the time of aduersitie. For this thing Paule attributeth to them as peculiar, that in tribulations they gloze and reioyce. Luke declareth the cause of this ioy in the .v. chapter, where he writeth howe the Apostles were beaten with rodde in the Counsell, and went out praysing God and reioicing that they were iudged worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. For they had a regarde to the promise of Christ, who promiseth them the fellowship of the kingdome of heauen, which haue abidden wyth him in his temptations. Whereupon they gather wyth Paule, that they shall be partakers of the gloze of Christ, and lyue wyth Christ for euer, which in this world are made like vnto him by bearing the crosse. It is very worthy to be considered, that we heare the Apostles so feruent and earnest in prayer, who being illuminated with the holy ghost, and with true fayth knowe that all thinges are ruled and gouerned by the prouidence of God. By this example are those fyne and ouercurious wittes confuted, which say there is no neede of prayers, bicause God of himselfe knoweth all our necessities, and by his prouidence all thinges are administred, whose deuise cannot be reuoked or interrupted by any maner of prayers. In dede we declare not our case vnto God, as one that is ignoraunt, but by carefull and faythfull remembryng him, we testifie our fayth. The holy men and Saintes also know that this is Gods euerlasting decre, that as manye as are in distresse and conuert vnto him, and call for his helpe and succour, those he heareth. For it is the commaundement of God: Call vpon me in the time of thy trouble, and I will deliuer thee. &c. Agayne: Turne vnto me, and I will turne vnto you. &c. The Apostles therefore praye in their afflictions, and according to their ensample, all the godly in their aduersitie, ought to seeke helpe and deliuerie at God onely, and in none else. We are taught mozeouer, that we ought not onely in aduersitie to seeke our deliuerie, but also to giue God thanks, and magnify his holy name, when we are afflicted. For verily it is an argument of his fatherly affection towards vs, when he correcteth the wanton-

ness

nesse of our fleſhe, with the rod of the croſſe or tribulation. And in nothing is the force of Gods comfort more effectually ſene, than when we are exerciſed in diuers temptations, according to that ſaying of the Prophete: In the multitude of the ſorrowes that I had in my heart, thy comfortes haue reſreſhed my ſoule. And Paule ſayth: As the afflictions of Chriſt abounde in vs, ſo through Chriſt aboundeth our conſolation. Wherevnto it ſeemeth Peter alſo had a reſpect, when wytyng vnto the brethren diſperſed among diuers Nations, he beginneth with the prayſe of God, and commendation of hyſ grace. Theſe thinges ought we to remember, when we are tempted with impaciencie of the fleſhe, that we be not overcome thereof, and mutter agaynſt God, which ſinne of all other chiefly prouoketh the wrath of God, as the examples of the children of Iſrael murmuring in the wilderneſſe, abundantly declare.

Nowe let vs come to the ſeconde poynt of this place, where it is ſhewed what God did. Sodeinly (ſayth Luke) there was a great earthquake, ſo that the foundation of the priſon was ſhaken, and immediately all the dores opened, and euery mans bandes were looſed. And no man neede doubt but that this was the only worke of God, and of none other, becauſe the Scripture declareth there is none other that can doe theſe thinges. In this place is ſet forth the force and effect of faythfull prayer. For (as the wiſe man ſayth:) it pierceth the Cloudes, and aſcendeth vp into the ſight of God, which neglecteth not the ſame. Hereof commeth it to paſſe that by prayer thoſe thinges are obteyned, which farre exceede the ſtrength of man, and where nature is conſtreyned to giue place. So we reade that by prayer Moſes deuided the waues of the redde ſea. By prayer he gaue the Amalekytes a great overthrowe. Iames the Apoſtle teſtifieth that Elias through prayer locked the heauens that they gaue no raine, and by the ſame opened them agayne. Here in this place, at the prayers of Paule and Silas, the foundations of the priſon are ſhaken, grones and manacles vnloſed, and all the dores of the priſon opened. Wherevnto that which we hearde before of Peter which was deliuered out of priſon at the prayers of the congregation, is alſo like. Let vs herewith comfort our ſelues in aduerſitie, that we be not overcome of the threates of the worlde, forasmuch as no man is able to take praying from vs, which is of more force and efficacie, as it well appeareth, than any other thing. And of the more force it is alwaye, the more grievouſly we are oppreſſed. Likewyſe let all men abſtayne from oppreſſing of Innocents, whoſe prayers and gronings we ſee are of ſuch effect with God.

Furthermore, let vs ſee the principall effect of this myracle, that is to ſaye, the conuerſion of the Tayler of the priſon, wherein the holpe gholt thought good to ſet forth a generall example for all menne to imitate. This conuerſion hath in it certayne ſteppes and degrees, which it ſhall be good for vs in order to conſider. Firſt, being waked with the earthquake, he ſaith all the dores opened: and where he thought all the priſoners were fledde, he drew his ſworde, and was about to haue killed himſelfe, fearing the ſeneritie of the lawes, which made it death for the Taylers of priſons, if any priſoners eſcaped through their negligence. An example of which ſeneritie, Herode before ſhewed vpon them, which he ſet to watch Peter. Thys keeper therefore mynding to eſcape open ſhame, and being deceyued wth the common error of the Gentyles, thought it woulde ſounde to his great

Pſal. 94.
2. Cor. 1.

1. Cor. 10.

God deliuereth the Apoſtles calling vpon him.

Eccle. 35.

The keeper of the priſon is conuerred.

praiſe

Ezech. 18.

Math. 5.

praise of manlynesse, in auoyding infamy and shame, to kill himselfe. Thus had Satan bewytched mens mindes, that they sought saluation in destruction, and prayse in ignominie and shame. Howbeit, in dede there is nothing more pernicious and dishonest, than to go about by violent death to throwe downe the burthen of the crosse that God layeth vpon vs, and this kynde of feare doth vtterly declare cowardlye hearts, and such as growe out of kinde, which neyther can nor will suffer any thing. Agayne, this is an euident argument of a desperate mynde, forasmuch as no man will be-reue himselfe of lyfe (which of all other is the pleasauntest thing that man can wythe or desire) but he that before hande despayreth of the helpe and grace of God, and as the example of Iudas the Traytor and such lyke abundantly declare. Therefore Paule doth well to call vpon this keeper, that he doe himselfe no harme. And Christian menne must take hede that they harken not to the suggestions of Satan, perswading them to kyl themselves. For whatsoeuer colour or pretence he set vppon them, yet in dede they are deuilysh, and daungerous, bicause it is euident, God wyll not the death of a sinner, but rather that he shoulde conuert and lyue. We are therefore taught by this example, what kynde of lyfe they commonly lead, which eyther serue the wicked, or consent vnto them, as it is euident this Tayler did, of whome we intreate. For beyng to obsequious and double diligent, to execute the wicked commaundement giuen him of wicked Magistrates, he putteth the Apostles in the stocks in the inner prison. But being fast a slepe, as though all thing had bene safe, such a chaunce falleth, as putteth him in hazard both of body and soule. Yea, he had euen nowe vtterly perished, had not the Lord of hys singular fauour reuoked him from destruction, by Paule the preacher of saluation. Let vs thynke that to be a notable & very golden sentence, whych is in the fyrst Psalm. Blessed is that man that hath not walked in the counsell of the vngodly, nor stande in the waye of sinners, and hath not sitten in the seate of the Icornefull. &c. Furthermore, we haue in Paule an example of Christian charitie, whych is so carefull for his saluation, who not long before had so vncourteously and vniustly handled him. Let vs imitate this doyng, and loue those which hate vs, and seeke their saluation that wishe our destruction. So shall we be taken to be the true children of God the father, which suffreth his sunne to aryse both vpon the good and the bad.

But let vs returne to the Tayler of the prison, which Luke writeth was sodenly chaunged, yea, become altogether another man. For after he heard the prisoners were not fledde, but stayed by the hande of God, comparing the boldnesse and playnnesse of the Apostles, wherof the like hytherto had bene seene in no men, with the present myracle, being stryken wyth the inward inspiration of God, he is altogether a whaped in hys minde. For he beginneth to feele in himselfe howe grievously he had sinned by his vngentle vsage of those, whome he sawe God so greatly regarded. Wherefore calling forthwith for lyght, he goeth in vnto them, falleth downe at their fete, and at length bringing them forth (which was contrary to the Magistrates commaundement) sayth: Syrs, what must I doe to be saued? Who will not here acknowledge the mightie hande of God, which wrought all this matter? Surely it must be ascribed vnto God, that he reuerenceth these men being scourged and put to open shame, that he breaketh the wicked and vniust commaundement of the Magistrate, and that he demaundeth the right way

way how to be saued. Yea, he teacheth by his example, that those thinges must not lightly or negligently be passed ouer, that God worketh myraculously in his seruaunts. For there is nothing almost more pernicious than that amazednesse, which maketh vs blynde in the manifest workes of God. It is euident that this thing in time past brought Pharao to his destruction, and at this day this hurteth many men, that they iudge all thinges come to passe by fortune and chaunce, and search not out the iudgements of God in the thinges which they see fall out beyonde the course of nature. Let vs therefore alway diligently marke and search out the right way of saluation, touching which, we see this keeper nowe so profytably made inquirie.

For streyght wayes the Apostles aunswere him friendly, and declare vnto him in fewe wordes, the right and absolute way of mannes saluation, saying: Beleue on the Lorde Iesus, and thou shalt be saued, and thy houshold. They preach fayth onely, and that fayth that stayeth vpon none other, but Iesus Christ, the onely authoz of saluation. For in him is conteyned all satisfaction, righteousnesse, redemption, and sanctification, all which we obtayne none otherwayes than by fayth, whych is the cause that the scripture teacheth we are iustified and saued by fayth: wherof seeing we haue diuers tymes intreated, these fewe wordes for this time may suffice. Let vs note well thys one thing, that there is none other thing, in scripture, for fayth to take holde on, but Christ. For hereof it is gathered that all they that seeke saluation out of Christ, lacke fayth, and are miserably molested with vncertaine opinions. Yet bicause this doctryne was more briebe, than a barbarous man and a Gentyle, coulde at the fyrst vnderstande, therefore the Apostles afterwarde, open the same more at large. For they preach the word of the Lorde, that is, the Gospell, aswell to hym as to all his housholde, the summe wherof is, that we are iustified and saued by fayth, through the merite of Christ. In the meane season we are taught, that fayth is no rashlye conceyued or imaginatyue opinion, but a full and perfyte knowledge of Iesus Christ, which dependeth vpon the eternall worde of God. Therefore fayth must be learned in his worde, and nothing admitted that is not plainly expessed in the Gospell. And whatsoeuer is contained therein, that let vs embrace with stedfast fayth, that we also by that meane maye be saued, through our Lorde Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honoz, power, and glozy, for euer. Amen.

The summe
of saluation
is fayth in
Christ.

The. Cxij. Homelie.

AND he tooke them the same houre of the nyght, and washed their woundes, and was baptised and all they of his housholde straight way. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meate before them, and ioyed that he with all his housholde beleued on God. And when it was day, the officers sent the Ministers saying: Let those men go. The keeper of the Prison tolde this, saying to Paule: The officers haue sent worde to lose you. Now therefore get you hence, and go in peace. Then sayd Paule vnto them: they haue beate vs openly vndercondemned, for all that we are Romaines, and haue cast vs in Prison, and nowe would they sende vs away priuily? Nay verily, but let them come themselues and set vs out: when the Ministers tolde these wordes vnto the officers they feared, when they heard that they were

Romaines,

Romanes; they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the Citie. And they went out of the Prison, and entred into the house of Lydia, and when they had seene the brethren, they comforted them and departed.



As the Euaungelist Luke hath diligently describ'd the tyranny and unrighteousnesse of the magistrate of Philippi, vsed against the faythfull seruantes of Christ, Paule and Silas: so he reporteth as diligently, howe the keeper of the Prison, a great dower in the sayde wicked enterpryse, was conuerted vnto the faith of Iesus Christ. The ende of all which hystorie is partly to learne vs the true way howe to turne vnto God, & then what afterwarde we must

do, when we are turned vnto God. And the fyrst point of this present place, pertayneth vnto the later member, wherein is declared what this keeper dyd, after he had embrased Christ. This part therefore we wyll fyrst declare, meaning afterwarde, to speake of the Apostles deliuerie, as much as God shall put in our mindes.

i. The fruite
and workes
of fayth.

As touching the keeper of the Prison nowe conuerted vnto Christ, foure things chiefly are assumed. Fyrst in the same night he bringeth the Apostles out of Prison, & washeth their sores. This he doth contrarie to the commaundement of the magistrate, which badde they shoulde diligently and straightly be kept. Yea, even he that knew the seueritie of the Iudges to be such, that he would euen now haue kyll'd hymselfe, when he thought the prisoners were fledde, bringeth them out of his owne accorde, putting hymselfe in manifest daunger of his lyfe. This place teacheth vs, that the chiefe and principall effect of fayth, is to make men obedyent vnto God, and bolde to put those thinges in execution, that they know God alloweth and commaundeth, although the worlde thinke neuer so much the contrarie. For this is the saying and minde of all the faythfull, as well as of Peter, that we must obey God more than man. Therefore they are confuted by this example, which nowe a dayes alleage the authoritie of Princes, publyke lawes, the friendship of the worlde, and infynite such lyke, agaynst the preceptes of God, and being frozen with cowardely feare, dare neuer attempt any thing in Christes quarrell and gloire. Let vs rather followe this keeper of the Prison, whome neyther authoritie of magistrate, publike lawe, breaking of Prison, nor present daunger, coulde so feare, but that he durst bring them out of prison, whome he knewe were vniustly committed thither, and to vnworthily entreated.

ii. Outwarde
religion.

After this he is by and by baptized, and causeth all his housholde lyke- wise to be baptized. For he had learned by the Gospell which the Apostles preached vnto him, that it was an ordynance of Christ, that all they which woulde beleue in him, shoulde be ioyned together into one bodye of the Church by baptisme. Wherefore he thinketh the sacrament instituted of Christ, ought not to be neglected, nor did not sophistically reason of the doctrine of fayth going before on this wise: If faith onely in our sauour Iesus Christ be sufficient vnto saluation, as you erewhyle dyd teache, whye require you nowe baptisme, which must nedes be superfluous and vnpro-

fytable.

fytable : For they that truly beleue in Christ, will neuer despise the ordynances of Christ, bicause they know that the sacramentes are not repugnant vnto faith, but are rather certaine labelles and outwarde scales of Gods promises, whereof we take holde by fayth. In the meane season we haue to consyder the zealous fayth of this keeper, wherewith he was so enflamed that he would haue his houtholde also dedicated vnto God by baptisme. An example wherof we had before also in Lyddia. Which thing as it serueth to confute the Annabaptistes, which of their owne head keepe the children of the faythfull from baptisme : so it reproueth the sloth and intollerable sluggishnesse of them, which haue so little care for their familie, that they regarde not to haue them consecrated vnto Christ and to hys Church, by outwarde sacramentes, thereby abundantly declaring, that they are not greatly carefull for the glory of God.

Thirde, he prepareth meate for them at his house, for that he knew they had in the Prison a verie slender supper, or none at all. This is a worke of christian liberalitie and loue, which they that beleue in Christ are neuer without. For it is impossible, to seporate fayth from the loue of God. And he that truly loueth God, can not neglect his neighbour, whom he knoweth is made after the similitude of God, and so esteemed of hym, that he would haue him redeemed with the bloude of his sonne, which was the cause that Paule sayth, fayth worketh through loue. Galat. 5. For althoughe there be many workes of fayth, yet may they all for the most part, be referred vnto charitie, bicause through it the whole lawe is fulfilled. And the Apostle Iohn teacheth vs that he that neglecteth his neighbour, neyther loueth God, nor hath any faith. Therefore this Tayler doth well, to declare his faith by workes of charitie, which it becommeth vs also busily to apply, if we will not be taken and called vaine professors of the faith.

Fourthly, he reioycesth with all his houtholde, bicause he beleued in God, and knewe he now belonged vnto the Church of Christ, in whome onely the treasures of saluation are layde vp. And yet (as we erewhyle declared) he was in great daunger thereby. For if the Iudges mindes had not bene sodainely altered, (which alteration he yet wist not of) he had dyed for it, insomuch as he had let those loose, whome the Iudge had commaunded to be laide in prons. But as faith maketh all men obedient vnto God : so it ouercometh all labours and daungers, and suffereth not the feeling of heavenly ioye, which the spirite of Christ inspyreth, to be overcome with any temptations. Therefore Paule wytyng to these faythfull of the Phylippians, byddeth them alwaies to reioyce and be glad. Moreouer, if a man would lay together all things saide hitherto of this Tayler, it shall appeare that fayth is not ydle, nor can not be separated from good workes. For what good workes are here lacking : He recompenseth the iniuries made before vnto the Apostles. He obeyeth God duely with present daunger of his lyfe, declaring hereby howe readie he ment afterwarde to be in all other thinges. He receyued the sacramentes duely as he ought to doe. For where he receyued baptisme streight way, it is not like he absteyned from the Lordes supper, seing he was conuersant with the faythfull. Furthermoze he was carefull for the saluation of his familie, and caused them also to be brought vnto Christ, and vnto the congregation, also he exerciseth charitie and benefyence liberally, and euen in the middle of daun-

15. Charitie.

Math. 22.
Roma. 13.

114. Joy of
spirite.

Roma. 6.
James. 2.

Full and per-
fect deliuey
of the Apo-
stles.

The repen-
tance of the
wicked.

1. Samu. 15.

gets ioyneth altogether in spirituall gladnesse. And yet the Apostles being asked the true waye of saluation, appointed him but faith onely in Iesus Christ. And this faith brought forth streight way such excellent frutes as we haue heard. Wherevnto yet we must not attribute the glorie of saluation, because he coulde haue done none of them, vnlesse by faith he had bene grafted in Christ, and quickned with his spirite. Here fyrst are they confuted, that saye the doctrine of faith is an enimie vnto good workes, seeing such increase of good workes springeth of none other thing so much as of faith. And next they also which vnder a false pretence of the Gospell, seeke the vnbrydled licentiousnesse of the flesh, and to sinne without check.

Howbeit after the hystory of the keeper of the Prison ended, Luke cometh vnto the officers of Philippi, and declareth howe the Apostles were deliuered by their commaundement and authoritie. For Gods workes are perfyte, and beguyle not mens mindes with vaine hope and expectation of his helpe and succour. In the meane season yet God marueylously tosseth the Apostles, that one maye see he vseth the wicked to fulfill his pleasure euen against their wyll. But let vs discusse all things in order, that we may receyue the more comfort and instruction thereby. By the breake of daye came Sergeaunts from the Magistrates, commaunding the Apostles to be let loose: and it shall appeare afterward by Pauls words, that this was a secret dimission they went about, meaning also to sende them out of the Citie. But howsoeuer they were dismissed, it is plaine that these Judges did acknowledge both the innocencie of the Apostles and also their owne vnrightheousnesse, which they vsed against them. But whether it was the meane whye of the night, that caused them to consider so much, or the earthquake that strake them in such feare, that they durst not holde on in their tyrannie, it is vncertaine. But assuredly, such sodaine chaunge of minde, did abundantly declare, both their rashnesse and vnrightheousnesse. Yet go they about marueylous craftily to hyde the heynousnesse they had committed, and whereof they were ashamed. For therfore woulde they haue the Apostles priuily to be set at libertie, to lay all the fault in them, as though they mistrusting their cause, had broke open the doores and fledde out of Prison. Thus the wicked vse with craftes and colours to seeke to seeme righteous, being ashamed of their naughtinesse, but meaning no earnest repentaunce, which causeth them to their further shame, to heape freshe offences and sinnes vpon the olde. Therefore this place teacheth vs fyrst what the repentaunce of the wicked is for the most part. Doubtlesse a counterfeyte repentaunce and such as reuerence and feare of men onely wzingeth out of them, not repenting in the meane season from the heart, nor nothing mindefull of amendement. Thus we reade Saule repented, when he earnestly required Samuel not to depart from him, least his authoritie and estimation should vtterly haue quayled, before the Elders and the people. That this is a vaine and vnprofytable repentaunce, appeareth euen by this, for that in the meane season, they hate the worde of God worse than a Tode, because the light thereof discloseth their wickednesse. Let euery man therefore so learne to acknowledge his offences, that he may also be sorrowfull for the same, and not seeke to hyde them wyth the shaming of other, but rather let them publishe them to the amendement of other, and to the setting forth of Gods glorie, whereof the scripture giueth

vs

his examples in Dauid and Paule. Also this place teacheth vs, how easilie wicked officers can quit themselves of great & heynous offences. For what could this men haue done more wickedly and vntworthy their calling, than to beate innocent persons, without hearing their cause, at the cry and clamour of the commons, and being all gore bloude, and their sores not washed, to cast them into a darke dungeon: And now they thinke it is ynough, if they put them not to death with more shame, but conuey them priuily out of the Citie. And here is no worde of amends making. This is a common thing in these dayes, especially in their causes whome the world hateth bicause of their sinceritie in truth and religion: yea, they thinke, they deserue great commendation of modestie and equitie, if they doe but deprive such Christians of honours and goodes, and banishe them their countrie. But let officers consider, that they are placed of God in such degree of power and honour. Let them also remember that iudgement belongeth vnto God. Furthermore, let them often remember, that they shall one day also come before Christ to be iudged, where they shall giue an accompt of all their iudgements. And therefore according to the admonition of the Prophete, let them holde the bloud of their subiectes deare in their sight.

Furthermore here appeareth the inuincible power of God, whereby he is able to take and deliuer his beloued out of the handes of the wicked, although they persist in their wickednesse. For they repent not of their naughtinesse, and thinke of no amendment, as we sayde euen now, yea they vndoubtedly wished the Apostles of Christ destroyed, yet by the secret working of God they are compelled to let them go free. So the Egyptians although they truly chaunged not their mindes, were constreyned to let the people of Israell goe, laden with Golde and siluer. Herevnto is to be referred how Saul, with his owne mouth, pronounced Dauid to be iust, and whome he had long sought to slay, him being founde, he dismissed with the publike testimonie of an innocent. So we reade the Apostles also were set at libertie in the Counsell at Ierusalem, when yet none of the Senators had forsaken his former impietie. Let this comfort be against the incurable malice of this worlde. Let the wicked runne on as long as they will, yet are they Gods instrumentes, to vse at his pleasure, and by them many times euen against their willes, he bleth to set forth his glozpe.

The keeper of the Prison telleth Paule what the counsell had decreed, being glad bicause he perceyued no craft in the matter. For commonly such is the simplicitie of the children of light, that they cannot alway see the meaning of the wicked. And at this day many like vnto this keeper, thinke all is well, if they whose liues were in daunger beset at libertie, and perceyue not in the meane season howe they go about to preiudice the Gospell wyth vnrighteous iudgements, and to stop and hinder the course thereof. Therefore Paule did much better, thus stoutely to refuse the fauour offered by this wicked magistrate, saying: they haue beaten vs openly vncondemned, for all that we are Romaines, and haue cast vs in Prison, and now woulde they send vs away priuily? Nay verily, but let them come themselves, and fet vs out. In the which wordes he complayneth him of iniurie done to him, and his fellow Silas, and to aggrauate the accusation the more, he alleageth the Romaine lawes, wherein it was enacted, that no man should vse any violence vpon the bodye of a Citizen of Rome before his cause were heard.

Wicked
officers.

Roma. 13.
2. Para. 13.
Deuter. 1.

Psal. 72.

The power
of God, in
deliuering
his people.

Exodus. 12.

1. Sam. 24.
and. 26.

The simplici-
tie of sayth.

Paule will
not be set at
libertie, and
dismissed
priuily.

The trade of
Christians
patience.

Defence of
lawe is per-
mitted to the
godlye.

The prepos-
terous feare
of the wicked.

Further he woulde not priuillie be put out of the Citie, but honorably. Let no man for all this accuse Paule, eyther of pride or impatiencie, considering he hath verie good cause thus to doe. For fyrst, he hath a care, that the doctrine of the Gospell be not charged with any wrong suspicion, which eyther might offende those that as yet were weake in the fayth, or else giue occasion to open enemies to reproche the same. For who would not haue thought that the Apostles had suspected their owne cause, if it had bene bruted abrode, that they had bene secretly fled? Moreover, Paule thought he would put these fierce fellows in a feare, & make them by this meanes to vse hereafter more aduisednesse, and lesse crueltye toward the members of Christ. Whereby we gather, that christian paciencie, is not to suffer the wicked to doe what they liste without comptrolement. But rather their wickednesse must be reprovued and byddelled, if by any meanes, it maye commodiously be done. Also the glorie of God and our innocencie must be defended, bicause many times herewithall, the saluation of many is imperilled. Thus Christ calleth them that came out to take him with swordes and stauies, the ministers and fulfillers of the power of darckenesse. And he openly reprehended the Priestes seruaunt, that smote him without a cause. So therefore must we patiently suffer whatsoeuer aduersitie cometh vnto vs, that yet we must not betray the cause of Christ and his truth, nor otherwise dishonestly forsake the same. Againe we are taught that the godly may vse the priuilege of positive lawes for their defence, as farre forth as they repugne not agaynst truth and religion. For Paule who was most ready to suffer any thing for Christes sake, would not haue alleaged the lawes of Rome, if they had bene wicked. So after this we shall heare, howe he appealed vnto Caesar, and vsed the lawfull defence of armour against that wicked conspiracie that intended to kyll him. Therfore great is their iniustice, which saye all vse of lawe is forbidden Christian men, and all kinde of defending themselves by lawe, and will haue them rashely to rushe into all kinde of daungers.

But what did the Magistrates of Philippi, when they had heard Paule speake? They were afrayde, not for that they had done them wrong, but bicause they vnderstode they were Romaines, whome they had so serued. For they well knew what the seueritie of the Romaines was in defending their lawes and priuiledges, in so much that (as Cicero testifyeth agaynst Verres) this saying, I am a free man or Citizen of Rome, helped and saued many, in the farthest partes of the worlde, euen among the barbarous people. And surely, next vnto religion, there is no stronger hold and bande of common weales, than fyne and constant keeping of equitie and lawes. Therefore their feare was not without a cause, for it was the occasion that they forthwith came vnto them, to excuse themselves of that they had done, and courteously to bring them out of prison, desiring them for the auoyding of further trouble, they would bouchsafe to depart out of their citie. Where likewise may appeare the condicions of the wicked, which being touchd with no feare of God, feare onely men of more anthozitie then themselves, and seueritie of lawes. And if they may freely without checke, offende before men, then dare they doe any thing. Wherof there is none other cause, then that they thinke there is no God, that careth for mens doings. But the godly are farre otherwise minded, whose care being set on God, they

so detest the horroz of sinne, that if at any time they offende of infyrmittie, they are feared more with the consideration of the offence committed, then of the punishment due for it. In the meane season we learne by this example to what ende and passe the rashe iudgements of wicked Magistrates come. Surely to bring the authozs thereof into perill and shame. Hence came it that these Magistrates stricken in feare, bring them forth honozably, to whome the day before, they had ignominiously put to shame: and thus accuse they their owne temerite and vnrighteousnesse. There are many examples of lyke kinde, the vse whereof is to teach Magistrates, and who soeuer beare authority, to learne to bydle their affections, and according to the prophane wynters saying, to take good deliberation afore they go about that thing, which they once intend to doe. Moreover, this example teacheth vs, that the force of innocencie is so great, that it egregiously confoundeth hir fiercest enimies. Therefore, let vs labour for innocencie, and let vs not doubt, but we also by hir meanes shall triumph ouer our enimies, howe fierce so euer now they shewe themselves to be.

The ende of
rashe iudgement.

Nowe remaineth the last part of thys hystorie, touching the Apostles going aboay, which they must needs doe, considering there was henceforth no place for them in that citie. Yet they so depart not as bitterly neglecting the congregation, but fyrst they go to see the brethzen gathered together at Lyddias house, and then they exhort to be stedfast in the fayth, and comfort them very effectually. Moreover, Paule wyrteth an Epistle vnto them, wherein we are taught, how prosperously this cōgregation afterwarde came forwarde, whose beginning seemed altogether vnprosperouse & vntowarde. Whereby it appereth the course of the Gospell can be hyndered by no attempts of the wicked. Sometime the Ministers thereof are bounde, but the worde of God can not be bounde. Againe, they that preach the same are thrust out and banished, but the spirite of Christ cannot be banished, but breatheth wheresoeuer it pleaseth, yea, when men holde their peace, the stones will preach Christ. Let these thinges make vs constaunt in the

The Apo-
stles depar-
ture from
Philippi.

fayth, that hauing at length overcome the worlde and Prince thereof, we may liue and raigne in heauen wyth Iesus

Christ our sauour: to whome be all praise,
honor, power, and glozy, for
euer. Amen.



The

The. xvij. chapter vpon the *Actes* of the *Apostles*.

The. Cxiiij. Homelie.

NOW E as they passed through Amphipolis, and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a great Synagoge of the Iewes, and Paule as his maner was, went in vnto them, and three Sabboth dayes disputed wyth them by the scriptures, opening and alleaging that Christ must haue suffred, and rylen agayne from the death: and this is Iesus Christ, whome sayde he, I preach vnto you: And some of them beleeued, and ioyned in companye with Paule and Silas: also of the Grecians that feared God a great multitude, and of the chiefe women not a fewe.



The constan-
cie of Paule.

Ur Lorde and Sauour Iesus Christ in the Gospell of Luke sayth: No manne which putteth hys hande to the plough, and looketh backward, is meete for the kingdome of heauen. Which wordes doe admonishe vs, that of all christians, especially of the Ministers of the word, is required an inuincible constancie of the minde, whereby they maye go forwarde without feare, against al traueyle and daunger, and not be withdratone by anye temptations, to forsake the office committed to their credit. Of which con-

stancie is set out vnto vs a most worthy example in the Apostle Paule: who from the fyrst daye he toke in hande the seruice of Christ and the Gospell, was in continuall labour and daunger, and yet held on, seeking daylie new occasion, with great courage of minde to set forth the kingdome of Christ. And as he had done heretofore in other places, the selfe same did he wyth incredible industrie among the Macedonians, as this present hystorie declarereth. For being verie euill intreated at Philippi, to the which place he was called by a vision, yet he murmureth not against God, nor doubteth not of his calling, nor leaueth not of his duetie through feare, but taketh his iourney directly thowtwe Amphipolis and Apollonia, and commeth to Thessalonica, the chiefe Citie of all Macedonia, where after he had spreade the lyght of the Gospell, he getteth him to Berrhoea, and from thence to Athens, where he preacheth Christ among the most learned Philosophers of the Gentiles, and as it were vpon the open stage of all the worlde. But to let passe all other thinges, let vs see what was done at this tyme, at Thessalonica.

first

first it is sayde he went through Amphipolis and Apollonia, and there is no mention made that Paule preached in those Cities, therfore it is lyke the holy Ghost, offered him no occasion there to preache. But when he came to Thessalonica, he went into the Jewes Synagoge, which was very notable and full of people, and there by the space of thre Sabbath dayes he taught them the gospell of Jesus Christ. And yet it might seme a straunge thing, that Paule woulde offer the doctrine of saluation agayne, vnto the Jewes, whose incurable malice he had so often tryed, and whome he perceyued, God had cast off by many euident arguments. But he was moued partly with the feruent desyre he had to set forth the kingdome of God, and partly with the constant loue that he bare to his nation, for whose sake othertwyle, he wished to be accursed. And yet we must not thinke this to be any blinde affection, for as much as the Lorde had long before prophesied, that though the Jewes were cast off, certaine remnauntes shoulde be saued. And perhappes he might be moued by the example of Elias, who when he thought all the people had forsaken the God of Israell, was tolde that there were yet seauen thousande, which had neuer bowed their knees vnto Baal. We are taught by this example of Paule, that we must not ouer hastily cease from doing our duetie, bicause of many mens ingratitude, but rather (as the Apostle otherwhere teacheth vs) tollerate the euill wyth mekenesse, instruct those that make resistance, if at anye time God will giue them repentance to knowe the truth, and that they may come to themselves agayne, out of the snare of the Deuill. For where we be the seruantes of God, it becommeth vs to imitate his condition and propertie, and not to be offended with the ingratitude of the worlde, for as much as we knowe, that we haue a rewarde layde by with the Lorde, which shall neuer fayle vs. Therefore inexcusable is their waywardenesse, which assonne as they perceyue, they nothing profite, cease of from doing their duetie, & are not ledde with the example of God, and of Christ, which bled such great lenitie and long sufferance towardes the incurable malice of the Jewes, euen from the fyrst beginning of that nation. It is also worthy the obseruation, to see howe Paule kepeth the religion of the Sabbathes, and goeth into the Synagoges to preach there, following the example of Christ, who dyd nothing in secret, but taught abroade openly. In the meane season we see this was an olde blage amonge the people of God, for the godly to come vnto the Church, for whose sake we reade holy dayes, and holy places were in times past ordeyned of God. It is necessarie that we obserue the same, both for doctrine sake, which can no waye more commodiously be taught, and also bicause of externe religion, which ought to be openly exercised, that the profession of true fayth fayle not. For the which cause Christ adourned the congregation and Church, comming with hys example, and commended it with a notable promise, and this is the cause that Paule in his fyrst Epistle to the Corinthyans, is so diligently occupied in gyuing preceptes, for the well ordering of them. Wherfore their frowardnesse must neddes be detested which deride and scoffe at the publike assemblies of christians, plainly testifying that they are ledde with no care of wholesome doctrine or sincere religion.

But what doth Paule in the Synagoge of the Jewes: euen the same that we heare he bled to doe in many places. For he taught out of the scriptures,

1. Paule
preacheth
vnto the
Jewes.

Esay. 10.

2. Tim. 2.

The obser-
uing the
Sabbath
dayes, and
comming to
Church.

2. The trade
or manner of
Pauls doc-
trine.

i
2. Timo. 3.
Iohn. 5.

ii

Luc. 4.

2. Timo. 2.
iii

tures, declaring howe it was necessarie that Christ shoulde die, and rise againe from the dead, and that this was the same Christ whom he preached. Here must we diligently marke all these pointes, bicause they fullpe conteyne the whole trade of the Apostles doctrine. For fyrst they shewe whence Paule fet his doctrine, verily out of the wyrtings of Moses and the Prophets, which otherwheres he sayth were inspyred of God, and in the which Christ witnesseth that the mysteries of eternall lyfe are conteyned. Therefore out of the same also in these dayes, must the doctrine taught in the congregation be taken. Neyther must their impudencie be bozne with, which will not haue the controuerxies of our dayes deuided by the Scriptures, but alleage vnto vs the traditions and Canons, (as they call them) of the Apostles and the fathers, and the counsels, as though they had left vs thinges of more imperfection and certaintie, than the Apostles. Further we are taught, howe Paule handled the scriptures. He opened them, that is to saye, by dyligent interpretation, he picked out the true sense and meaning of them, & applyed the things therein conteyned to his present purpose. Which he coulde no wayes more commodiously doe, then by conference of places. By this example of Paule is theyr errour confuted, which saye it is sufficient to haue the scripture read ouer in the Church, and wyll not suffer the same by exposition to be opened. Therefore in these mennes iudgement, Paule offended verie much, yea Christ himselfe, who as we may reade vsed the same order of teaching in the schoole at Nazareth. But whosoener followeth the example of Christ can not offend. And Paule doth much better, which requireth such a teacher of the Church, as can distribute and deale (as it were) the worde of truth iustly and duely, and can apply it to the instruction and comfort of euery body. Thirde, is declared the argument of Pauls doctrine, which conteyneth in it chiefly two poyntes, setting them as it should seme, agaynst so many errors of the Jewes. For fyrst they were offended at the crosse of Christ, bicause they vnderstode the oracles of the Prophetes according to the letter, and ymagined that the kingdome of Christ shoulde be temporall, and looked for a Messias wythout a crosse: Which error may now a dayes also be perceyued in them, which would haue the Gospell preached without the crosse, and where they desyre to be saued by Christ, will not suffer, and be afflicted with him. The other error of the Jewes was, that they denyed Jesus the sonne of Mary, to be their Messias or Christ. Paule laboureth to put both these errors away, going about to proue by testimony of scriptures, that God had from before the begynning of the world, ordeyned this way for man to be saued by, that is to say, by the incarnation, death, and resurrection of his sonne. Againe, applying those things vnto Jesus the sonne of Marie, which the Prophetes in tymes past, spake before of the Messias, he euidently declareth, that he ought to be acknowledged for the Messias, and that none other ought to be looked for. Nowe as Paule declared these things at large, by testimonies of scriptures gathered out of all places: so might they be by vs in ample wise prosecuted. But bycause it appeareth easily by the sermons, both of Paule and the other Apostles going before, what places they for the most part vsed, and they that vse to reade the scriptures, fynde euerywhere such things as conteyne in them the knowledge of Christ: we wyll of purpose be the shorter. In the meane while we haue here two things to obserue. fyrst, what

what ought to be preached in the Church. Verily, euen Iesus Christ only, whome Paule otherwheres confesseth onely that he knoweth and none other. For where he alone is sufficient for vs in all things, because he is giuen to vs of the father, to be our Bydegrome, Shephearde, King and Priest, head, righteousness, wisdom, satisfaction, sanctification and redemption, & he himselfe would haue men brought vnto him: it is vnnete to teach any thing not agreeable with him. The seconde thinge is, howe Christ should be preached. To be euen such an one, as the Scriptures declare him to be, who dying for vs on the Altar of the crosse, purged our sinnes, and by his glorious resurrection overcame death, & who reigneth not in this worlde, lyke vnto the kings here on earth, but being taken vp into heauen, comforteth vs by his spirite, and through our afflictions and infyrmities of the flesh, triumpheth ouer all our aduersaries. They that haue conceyued in their mindes Christ to be such an one, can be offended at no worldly attempts, but being boyde of care, and merie, laugh at all that the worlde goeth about, against the Church. Learne therefore, hereby to iudge of the doctrine of these dayes, and harken not vnto them, which in the businesse of our saluation, teach any more, then Christ, seing that Paule knewe him onely, notwithstanding he was rapt vp into the thirde heauen.

Moreouer, the successe declareth, that Pauls preaching was not in vaine. For certayne of the Jewes belæued, yet but a few, because noboe beganne the blindnesse of that nation. Yet God kepeth and fulfylleth hys truth, while he saueh certayne remnauntes, out of the innumerable multitude. And that they were vnfaigned belæuers, appeareth by this, that they openly ioyne themselves vnto Paule and Silas, both for learning sake, and also to protest openly their beliefe. Yet a greater company of the Grekes belæued, whome he calleth religious, because before this, they had tasted a little of true religion, which it is lyke they learned, by being conuersant with the Jewes. For although the incredulitie of that nation was past hope, yet God would vse them being dispersed abroad in the worlde, to bring the Gentyles from ydolatry, vnto the worshipping of the true God, and euerywhere to sow certayne principles and grounds of pure religion, touching the honouring and inuocating of one God. With this company of the faithfull, are numbred certayne noble and chiefe women, that a manne maye see howe God hath a regarde of his elect in all states and degrees of persons. This place teacheth vs, that the Gospell is neuer preached in vaine, as hath bene already oftentimes declared. Here are also touched the duties of them that truly belæue, ardent desyre of true doctrine and religion, thankfulness towarde the teachers of saluation, and playne and open profession of the true fayth. For God will haue none of them to worship him that can dissemble, and play on both handes. God graunt that we also being illuminated with the light of true fayth, may declare our fayth both in worde and dede, and by the same maye come vnto the inhe-

ritance of the kingdome of heauen, with the onely begot-

ten sonne of God Iesus Christ: to whome be

praise, honour, power and

glorie, for euer.

Amen.

The fruite
of Pauls
teaching.

The. Cxiiij. Homelie.

B V T the Iewes which beleueed not had indignation, and tooke vnto them euill men, which were vagabondes, and gathered a company, and set all the Citie on an roare, and made assault vpon the house of Iason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they founde them not, they drewe Iason, and certayne brethren vnto the heades of the Citie, crying. These that trouble the worlde are come hyther also, whome Iason hath receyued priuile. And these all doe contrarie, to the decrees of Caesar, affirming an other king, one Iesus. And they troubled the people and the officers of the Citie, when they heard these things. And when they were sufficiently aunswered of Iason, and of the other, they let them go. And the brethren immediatly sent away Paule & Silas by night vnto Berrhœa, which when they were come thither, entred into the Synagoge of the Iewes.



Genc. 3.

S God ordeyned his sonne from euermoldesting, to be the sauour of mankinde: so he prophesied in the beginning of the world, that there should be perpetuall enmitie and contention, betwene the Deuill and him, when he sayde vnto the Serpent. I will set enmitie betweene thee and the woman, betweene thy seede and hir seede: The same shall treade downe thy heade, and thou shalt treade vpon hys heele. Continuall examles of which prophecie, this booke of the Apostles actes declareth vnto vs. For wheresoeuer in the worlde, the Apostles went about to erect and establishe the kingdome of Christ, by the preaching of the Gospell, there Satan by his instrumentes, alwayes withstode them. This he did fyrst at Ierusalem by the Scribes & Pharisies, after that at Samaria, by Simon the Sorcerer, after that againe, at Damascus by Areta king of Arabia, in Cyprus by Elymas the Sorcerer at Antioch in Pisidia, by the Iewes: who after that of an obstinate purpose and implacable hatred followped Paule euerywhere by sea and by lande, to hynder and stop the course of the gospell. For these were his enemies at Lystra. These withstode him as he taught at Derba. And now being called of God into Macedonia, they trouble and molest him. For by their meanes, as this present place teacheth, he is thrust out of Thessalonica, where the gospell began prosperously to take roote. The chiefe vse of all these things is, that we must not be offended, if the lyke come vpon these dayes, but that we consider, that this alway is the state of the church, in this worlde, because the worlde delyghteth more in seruing the Prince thereof, than in Christ. But let vs beue this present place, which marueylously serueth to instruct and comfort vs, against the wicked assaultes of the Deuill, and the worlde. For fyrst it teacheth vs with what instrumentes the Deuill fought agaynst Paule at Thessalonica. After that, it describeth their properties and qualities, and the good successe of all this Tragedie.

1. Hypocrites
and vagabonds
are
the enemies
of truth.

Among the instrumentes of the Deuill, which he here thought good to vse, are two kynde of men rehearsed. The fyrst are the Iewes, which Luke sayth had indignation at the Apostles. But they were hypocrites, which

vse

used the pretence of Gods lawe, and zeale of auncient religion, to cloke their obstinacie and vnbeliefe with, where in dæde they sought nothing, but their priuate gaine and glozve, as by their conspiracie may easily appeare. For they tooke vnto them certaine bagabundes, men of naughtie conditions, whose companie they ought to haue shunned, as a most pestilent plague, if they had loued truth and religion. For thus are ydle and luskie lubbers worthe to be called, who when they haue spent their goodes in wast, stande in the market place, lyke publyke wares to be solde, and are ready to commit all kinde of mischiefe, so they may fynde a buyer. This is a marueylous society, and such as a man would neuer once suspect could be amonge professours of such vnlyke studies, but that the force of hatred, once conceyued against the truth, is so great, that it bseth to ioyne men of most diuers conditions, and natures in league together. Thus thou seest the Priestes, Scribes and Phariseyes, the Sadduceyes, Iudas the Apostle, the souldiours, Herode and Pilate, conspire together against Christ, all which otherwise were of diuers countreyes, religion, and profession. This place teacheth vs, who are the most earnest and chiefest enemies of the truth. Verily hypocrites, which vnder a false pretence of religion, seeke their owne aduantage, and such as being nusseled in ydlenesse, and cannot away with pouertie, are ready to sell their helpe about any thing. For as the fyrst sort by the testimonie of Christ, can not belæue, because they burne in desyre of priuate glozve: so the other thinke there is most right, where most mæde is. Therefore Satan bseth craftily to ioyne and consociate these two sortes of men together, to the ende, that these bolde and desperate dickes of Caria hyred and waged by hypocrites, may with open violence bring that to passe, which they cannot with their craftie and subtile inuentions. This is the cause that nowe a dayes, so manie Prelates are seene in kings Courtes, that Bishops be of Princes counsels, and that Monkes which bragge they are men deade vnto the worlde, are seene flying in the fyeld among armed men. For they can fynde themselves no more trustie defendoures, than such as haue solde their soules and consciences, and measure all truth and religion, by gaine and lucre. These things teach vs what kinde of men they shoulde most of all beware of, which desyre to haue their Churches in safety. In many places now a dayes, Abbotes and Bishops, craftily insynuate themselves, and pretende a kinde of zeale. But when they are once let in, by and by they fynde men mæte for their purpose and deuises, which being brybed with golde, dare forceably doe anye thing against the doctrine of Christ: and they are founde to be most of all other, boyde of al religion and righteounesse, which seemed before to beare greatest zeale vnto God.

This the seconde part of this place teacheth vs, which declareth their doings which hytherto pretended the zeale of godlynesse in their enterpryse. The fyrst thing that they doe, they set all the Citie by their conspiracie in an bpzoze, which was easie for them to doe, by false rumours which they spredde both openly and prively agaynst the Apostles, as enymies of the publike weale. That done, they violently giue an assault to an other mans house, meaning to haue brought forth the Apostles, if they had found them there. But what kinde of zeale is that, that maketh men burst open doores, and hale innocents vnto death: Yet is there a more heynous matter than

Iohn. 5.

1. The inuasions of the enemies of truth.

Luc. 22.

this. For when they could not fynde them they sought for, they bring and pull before the Judges, Iason the Apostles hoste, a man for his hospitality, worthy of singuler prayse, and with him certaine of the brethren which beleued in Christ, and accuse them as Traytors vnto the Citie. And they so frame their accusation, that they intermeddle in euery worde, most impudent lyes, and flanders: These (say they) that trouble the worlde, are come hyther also, whome Iason hath receyued priuilye. They call the Apostles, which preach peace and mutuall loue, troublers of the worlde, whereas they themselues had nowe set all the Citie on a roare lyke seditious fellows. But bicause they knewe, religion in pretence whereof they made this adwe, was finally regarded among the Thessalonians, they exaggarate the matter, and say that the Apostles did all things against the lawes and decrees of Caesar, and so accuse them of treason, saying, they appointed an other to be king of the worlde, affirming in a maner the same, that they of Jerusalem before objected against Christ before Pylate. If you let these men go, you are not Caesars friende. The chiefe vse of these thinges, is to learne vs with what instrumentes and weapons, the wicked most assault the truth and hir Ministers. First they vse open force. For where Satan is a murtherer, they thinke they haue a great defence therein for themselves. So Pylate sent forth his crewe with swordes and clubbes to take Christ, which plainly sayde he did exercise the power of darkenesse. Thus Cain violently kylled Abel. And Pharaos openly afflicted the Israelites. Yea if a man would consider the hystories of all ages, he shoulde see the chiefe argumentes of the eninies of the truth founded vpon secular power. And commonly in these dayes, they vse to dispute against the godly, with imprisonment, chaynes, Gunnes, Speares, fyre and sworde. Howbeit, bicause the wiser sort, abhorre from manifest violence and tyranny, Satan knoweth craftily howe to mitigate the heynousnesse of this matter with lying, going about by false accusations and flanders to bring the seruantes of Christ and faythfull Ministers of the truth, in ignominie and suspicion. Examples hereof we haue else where alleaged in Achab the king, and in the Jewes, accusing Christ before Pylate, so that we neede tarie no longer in this matter. Let vs learne at the least not rashely to beleue them, that grienously accuse the godly, as though they were blasphemers of God, iniurious to the saintes, and disturbers of the common weale. Let vs rather search out the verie truth of the matter, and commonly it shall appeare they are most innocent, which before seemed worthy of all kinde of punishment. This place teacheth vs furthermoze, what great destruction cometh vnto common weales, by ydle and gracelesse persons. For when they haue spent and consumed their owne goodes, they gape after other mens, and will be hyzed for a little, to commit a great mischiese, whereby it cometh to passe, that they which will not by iustice of discipline punish them, are at length much cumbered and endamaged by them, and perceyue their common weales by them to be much hyndered. So these men being long suffered at Thessalonica, wax at length so bolde and desperate, that being entised and hyzed by the Jewes, they beginne a publike sedition, and their boldenesse putteth all men in feare, which thing seemeth to me, to haue bene the cause that Paule afterward wytyng to the Thessalonians, warneth them so dyligently to see to the ordering of them, that liued ydly of other mens labours.

bours. For to let passe this present example, there are euerywhere manye examples of other nations, which teache vs that there are no kynde of men more pernicious vnto common weales. But in steede of a great many, that one may serue, that is written in the storie of the Romaines, of the coniuration of Catiline and his Complices. Most prudently therefore did the Athenians sometyme inact, that fluggishe and ydle persons shoulde be brought out into the market place, and openlye shamed, as men getting their lyuing by no honest arte or trade. With the same Athenians, the officers called Arcopagite, when they suspected anye of inordinate lyfe, called them befoze them, and demaunded of them, howe they liued and mainteyned themselves. Which seueritie and industrie, if it were bled in our dayes, woulde make our common weales and Churches more quiet than they be. But it is a foule thing for christian men, in this poynt, to be overcome of Gentiles, whome reason and experience of the fleshe onely taught to be more wise than we.

Nowe let vs see the ende of this Tragedie, whose beginning was such that no man would haue thought it coulde haue bene ended without shedding of bloud. First the Judges and people are both moued, as commonly it bseth to be in sedition, so that at the fyrst bzunt, wisemen and modest also, are almost amazed, and wote not what to doe. But as God with a little blast of winde, can chase away the threating and clowdie countenance of heauen: so in this place, with small adoe, he maketh them quiet & calme, that erewhile seemed to be starke mad. For by the secret working of hys spirit, he mittigateth the mindes of the Judges, to heare Iason speake, and at length being satisfied, to dismyss hym and the other brethren. In the meane while, the brethren in the night season, sende away Paule and Silas to Berrhoea, where they againe go into the Synagoge, and preache with great fruit and vtilitie. But as in this counsell of Thessalonica, is set forth a president of ciuile iustice and equitie, for all men to follow, which are in office and authoritie, so in the other persons haue we some thinges also to be obserued. And fyrst this thing is verie comfortable, that is tolde of Iason. He for his kindenesse shewed vnto the Apostles, is in great daunger. But the Lorde so deliuereth him, that he obteyneth an euerlasting praise in the congregation of the saintes. And thus is the promise of Christ fulfilled, which promised a sure rewarde vnto him that giueth but a Cup of cold water vnto any one of his disciples. Let this kinde in vs also a desyre vnto godlynnesse, that it seeme not to vs intollerable to suffer traueyles and perilles for Christes saythfulles sake. Further the brethren of Thessalonica shewe themselves thankefull vnto Paule and Silas, in that they accompany them and bringing them on their waye, in the night season, putting themselves a freshe in daunger, so that it is not without a cause that Paule commendeth their fayth in the Epistle he wyrteth vnto them. The Galathians also are commended of him for the same cause, who (sayth he) were ready to haue giuen him their eyes, if he had needed them. But nowe a dayes Ministers haue small thanks, for they are the fyrst in daunger, and sometime deliuered into the handes of their cruell enemies, by them which will be taken for most christian people, and Gospellers. Finally, we haue to consider Paule, which embraaseth the counsell of the brethren, wylling him to flye, vnderstanding that it was a thing permytted by Christ, when ney-

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sedition.

Math. 10.

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ther the glorie of God, nor the weale of the brethren and congregation was in daunger. For God will not haue vs perishe without great cause, and for no profyte. In the meane season, in the flying, they are not forgetfull of their duetie, but as soon as they come to Berrhoea, they teach agayne. By which example we are admonished, that we must so see to our owne safety, that we forsake not our standing and tackle. But if we be endued with the zeale of God, the cause it selfe, time, and place, shall easily giue vs counsell what to doe. Let the power and goodnesse of God also comfort vs, whereby we see Paule so often defended and deliuered, and hauing this, let vs manfully defend our vocation, that hauing with stedfast course gotten the Gole, we may obteyne the rewarde of eternall life, in our sauour Iesus Christ: to whome be praise, honoz, power and glorie, for euer. Amen.

The. Cxv. Homelie.

THESE were the noblest of birth among them of Thessalonica, which receyued the worde with all diligence of minde, and searched the scriptures daylie, whether those things were euen so. And many of them beleeued, also of worshipfull women which were Greekes, and of men not a few. When the Iewes of Thessalonica had knowledge that the worde of God was preached of Paule at Berrhoea, they came and mooued the people there. And then ymmediatly the brethren sent away Paule to go as it were to the Sea, but Silas and Timotheus abode there still. And they that guyded Paule, brought him vnto Athens, and receyued a commaundement vnto Silas and Timotheus, for to come to him with speede and went their way.



Although the kyngdome of our Sauour Iesus Christ is daylie and continually assaulted by this world, and the Prince thereof, yet can it be so little ouerthrowne, that in the myddle of persecutions, it most prosperously cometh forwarde. The contynuall hystorie of this booke declareth the same, but chiefly the discourse of the things done by Paule. For as he laboured more than all the Apostles else, so he suffered more grievous persecutions than they, and found euerywhere enemies of the fayth, by whose craft he was still chased and dryuen away. But as often as the rage of his enemies compelled him to auoyde any place, so often he left the seede of Gods worde in the mindes of the hearers, and caried the Gospell to an other place, and so still wanne more vnto Christ the Lord. Luke wyrteth that this was done at Macedonia. For we hearde howe he was vniustly and vniworthly intreated at Philippi, yet the Epistle which he wrote vnto the Philippians declareth, that he had not laboured there in vaine. His persecution was cause that he went vnto the Thessalonians, amongs whome he taught thre Sabboth dayes. At length he was driuen from thence also, by his olde enemies the Iewes. But the faith of Christ could not be driuen out, which now had taken roote in many mens hartes. But hee being come vnto Berrhoea, preacheth the Gospell with great auayle. These things serue to comfort vs, against the attempts of the world, and the Deuill. For as Salomon sayth: There is no counsel against the Lord. But it is his counsell or deuise, that Christ should haue all power in heaven and

and in earth, and that the borders and boundes of his kingdomes shoulde be stretched ouer all the worlde. Wherefore it must needes come to passe, for as much as heauen and earth shall sooner fayle, then the decrees and ordynances of God. But let vs see this present place, which declareth what things Paule dyd at Berrhoea.

He beginneth with the commendation of the Iewes at Berrhoea, declaring howe prosperously, and in what order the gospell proceeded among them. He commendeth them by comparing them with the Thessalonians. For these men contumeliously reiected the worde of God. But those of Berrhoea, being of a more towardnesse and better zeale, receyued the same with all readynesse of minde, and searching the scriptures by themselves, at home they examined & tried the things that Paule taught, as with a Touchstone. Hereof it came to passe, that a great multitude of them beleued, and by their example, manye of the Graekes and Gentyles, as well men as women, were brought vnto the fayth of Christ. This example teacheth vs what maner of men they ought to be, that will profytably heare the Gospell. Aboue all thinges it is necessarie to haue a certayne readynesse of minde, to receyue the same. For vnlesse the worde maye haue place gyuen it in the mindes of men, it can bring forth no fruite. Wherefore, they stumble at the verie thresholde, and euen in the beginning, that disdaine to heare the worde, which is the peculiar marke of the children of the Deuill, as Christ teacheth. This example is to be well obserued of them which are proude of their nobilitie and byrth, and baunt themselves therof, in vaine cognizances and badges. Howbeit, touching the generation of the fleshe, it is in all men alyke corrupt, and such as maketh vs the children of sinne. The seede of regeneration is the worde of God, which being quickened in our minde by the spirite, we that before were the seruauntes of sinne, are borne to be the children of God. Therefore they are neyther noble nor gentle which giue not place herevnto, and be not borne againe of the same, and so be made the children of God. Wherefore Luke truly calleth these people of Berrhoea noble, for their studie and desyre that they had vnto the worde. In the meane season yet we must take hærde of to much facilitie, least to hastily receyuing whatsoeuer is taught, vnder pretence of Gods worde, we learne false opinions, and be carped about with vncertayne doctrine, as with a blast of winde. Therefore we must weygh and expende, and examine whatsoeuer is sayde, by the Canon of holpe scripture, according to that saying of Paule: Trye or prouue all thinges, keepe that which is good. And S. John the Apostle sayth: Beloued, beleue not euery spirite, but try the spirites whether they be of God or no. Two notable errours are confuted in this place, which haue grievously troubled the Church, a great number of yeares. One of them is the forbidding of the laytie, and commons, to reade the holy scripture. Yet God would haue them alwaye common to all sortes of men. For he made a lawe to that ende, before all the multitude of Israel called vnto the same. And the holpe Ghost ordeyned that the bookes of Scripture shoulde be written in none other, but the vulgare tongue. And sure it were an absurde matter, to exclude anye man from the doctrine of eternall lyfe, seeing God would haue the same, and the knowledge thereof, to come vnto all men. The other errout they holde, which will haue their doctrine iudged of no man, but lyke arrogant and

1. Berrhoea is
lyghened
with the
Gospell.

Iohn. 8.

1. Thess. 5.
1. Iohn. 4.

1. Tim. 2.

Galat. 1.

Iohn. 10.

Esay. 10.

Galat. 3.

2 The distur-
bance of the
Church at
Berrhoea.

Psal. 2.

Cyclopicall Gyauntes, challenge to themselves authoritie, to teache what they will in the Church: yea they say it is intolozable and hereticall, that any man should demaund of them any reason or accout of that they say. Are they then better then Paule was, which suffred his sermons to be examined according to the rule of scripture? Or else shall he be an heretike that now a dayes doth that for the which these people of Berrhoea were counted noble and true chyldren of God: Yea, howe say you, if Paule submit himselfe vnto the censure of the godly? His wordes be these. If eyther I Paule, or an Aungell from heauen preach an other Gospell, than hath bene preached, he ought to be accursed. And Christ sayth this is the propertie of his shepe, to know his voyce, from the voyce of a straunger, and to follow his voyce onely. Nowbeit the short role or recount of belaeuers that Luke rehearseth, must be also considered, which we see was gathered together of al kinde of men. First many Jewes belaeue, althoughe the forsaking of that Nation was euen at hande. Yet God vtterly forgetteth not his couenaunt, but according to his promise, preserueth certaine remnaunts. Vnto these are adioyned certaine noble and chiefe women of the Gentyles, and at length are dyners men besides numbred. Whereby it appeareth, that the grace of God, which is giuen vs in Christ, appertayneth to all sortes of men, and that none is to be excluded from it, eyther for cause of countrie, nation, sexe or whatsoeuer condition. For in Christ Iesu, there is neyther Iewe nor Gentyle, bondman, nor free, man nor woman. &c. Which thing as it serueth to comfort vs, so it teacheth euerie man to be mindefull of christian societie, and to contempne no man ouer insolently, in comparison of himselfe.

But let vs see what Satan attempted at Berrhoea against the kingdome of Christ, verily euen the same that he dyd otherwheres. For he can not suffer that to go forwarde, that he knoweth hyndereth and ouerthroweth his kingdome. And bicause he could fynde none in that Citie, meete to serue his turne, he calleth out the Jewes from Thessalonica, who hearing and disdayning that the sayth of Christ went forwarde at Berrhoea, come flying in post haste, and cause a great sturre and tumulte there also. Satan therefore bleseth the lyke pollicie here that we sawe he vsed before at Lysra, which is his propertie also at these dayes, if he perceyue there want disturbers of Christes kingdome in one place, to bring and fetch them from an other. And it is a marueyle to see howe nymble the Monkes be in accomplishing this matter, whome the Deuill can craftily sende abroad not onely into Cities, but also into kings Courtes and priuie counsels, to cause Princes being bewitched with their suggestions, to shut their eares against the doctrine of truth. In the meane season, marke here the incurable malice of the Jewes, wherewith they are so netled, that they themselves doe not onely refuse the sayth of Christ, but also can not suffer other to be illuminated with the same; so that it is not without a cause, that Paule so earnestly reprehendeth them, in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, the seconde Chapter. Lyke vnto these men are all those in these dayes, that giue themselves to the deuill, to be instrumentes to impugne the sayth of Christ, and thereby seeke great commendation. Yet let them remember, that they shall haue the same iudgement, whereof was shewed an example vppon the Jewes, to the wonder of the whole worlde. For the holy ghost long agoe prophcyed, that all they shoulde be brused with the yron rodde of Christ,

which

which would not be corrected and amended by his worde. And there want not examples of most mightie kings, which haue founde this reuengefull sentence of Christ true, to their great losse and hynderaunce, whereof because we haue already at large intreated otherwheres, we will for this time be contented, to haue spoken these fewe wordes.

But what doe the brethren in the middell of this hurlye burlye: Leave they Paule in the byrars and daunger, or refuse they to giue him counsell, and to helpe him: No. But rather leauing Silas and Timotheus, which were not in such daunger, to remaine at Berthea, they conuey Paule away, vsing therein great and singuler diligence. For they take their iourney towards the sea, and by and by turne their course and come to Athens, from whence Paule afterwarde wrote his fyrst Epistle to the Thessalonians. It seemeth they helde not on their waye directly, because they woulde auoyde the wayte of the Jewes, who they sawe ragged in such hatred against Paule. Furthermore, here is to be obserued, the loue and kindnesse that they of Berthea shewe vnto their teacher. For who doubteth but this attempt of theirs was a matter, not onely of much expence and labour, but also of great daunger. But nothing could let them to go on in their godly duetie, because they had a right iudgement of the benefyte of the gospel, which they had receyued, and they thinke it but a small matter, to shewe an outwarde duetie and reuerence, for the gift of eternall saluation. Some a dayes, because fewe men iudge rightly of Gods grace offered in the gospel, they will susteyne no labour and perill about the same. But most times it cometh to passe, that they which will suffer no daunger for Christes cause, an other tyme are molested with greater cares, for causes lesse godly. This place furthermore teacheth vs that wisdom with fayth maye well stande together. For Christ commaundeth vs to beware of the wylinesse of men, and to vse the wisdom of Serpents against it. We haue neede therof, because of the children of this worlde, whom Christ himselfe witnesseth to be wiser in their generation, than the children of light. Yet let vs remember that we must appoynt certaine boundes vnto the wisdom of the fleshe, that we doe nothing through the counsell and perswasion thereof, against our duetie, wherein there is no better or more safe remedy, then if we submit all our vnderstanding vnto the obediencie of fayth, as Paule otherwheres teacheth vs. So shall it come to passe, that we shall neyther tempt God by putting our selues rashely in daunger, nor dishonestly forsake the truth, but holde the myddle way in doing our duetie, and hereafter raigne with Iesus Christ whome we serue in heauen: to whome be praise, honoz, power and glozy for euer. Amen.

3. Paule departed from Berthea.

Math 10.

Luke 16.

The Cxvj. Homely.

WHILE Paule wayted for them at Athens, his spirite was mooued in hym, when he sawe the Citie giuen to worshipping of Images. Then disputed he in the Synagoge wyth the Iewes, and with the deuout persons, and in the market daylie with them that came vnto him by chaunce. Certaine Philosophers of the Epicures and of the Stoikes disputed with him. And some there were which sayde, what will this babler say: Other sayde he seemeth

to be a rydings bringer of new Deuils, bicause he preacheth vnto them Iesus and the resurrection. And they tooke him and brought him into Mars hys seate, saying, maye wee not knowe what thys newe doctrine whereof thou speakest is? for thou bringest straunge rydings to our eares, we would know therefore what these things meane? For all the Athenians and straungers that were there gaue themselves to nothing else, but either to tell, or to heare some newe thing.



The Euaungelist Luke hytherto hath described the dyuers iourneys and wandzings of Paule the Apostle, by reason whereof he lyghtened so manye nations and Cities with the preaching of the gospel, that he sayde otherwheres, not without a cause, that he had laboured, more than all the Apostles. Further, least any man might thinke, he had drawne ignoraunt and vnlearned men onely with an artifysiall and elaborate kinde of eloquence, he came at length to Athens, not without the certaine aduise of Gods prouidence, which I thinke was the most famous Citie that euer was. For in antiquitie it passed many, as which had to hye King Cecrops, about the time of Moses. Afterwarde being renoumed by reason of the victories that she had achieved against the Persians, shee did purchase vnto hir selfe immortall commendation, for deliuering of Greece out of the handes of a barbarous people. In happy pregnancie and sharpnesse of wytte, she passed all other. For hye we haue to thanke, for Socrates, Plato, Zenophon, Crates and infinite others, very famous by reason of their wisdom. Which was the cause that in hir was founded a certaine vniuersitie and schoule, as it were of the whole world, where vnto most noble men resorted from all partes of the worlde, as vnto an onely sea and Castell of all wisdom. And such was the fame of hir wisdom, that the Romaines when they had overcome all Asia, thought their childeen could no where in the worlde be better instructed in preceptes of wisdom and maners of lyuing, then at Athens, as the preface of Cicero to his sonne, vpon the booke of Offices and duties testifieth. And euen as in many other things, so also in religion and honouring of the Gods, she seemed to excell all others, bicause in hir was to be seene, the ymage of Minerva, which was thought to haue comie downe from heauen, and manye persons were at Athens whome they gloried in, and accounted as Goddes: Into thys Citie did the Lorde sende Paule the Apostle, to bring it by his ministerie vnto the obedience of fayth. And that this was not attempted without good successe and profyte, the ende well proued. This is a notable example both of the goodnesse of God, and of the power of the gospel. For who would not acknowledge the vnspeakeable grace of God, when he heareth a Citie utterly drowned in the darknesse of ydolatrie, and humaine wisdom, to be so fauourably regarded of God. Againe, who will not marueyle at the invincible power of the gospel, when he seeth the wisest men in the world, confounded by the same: and that by the ministerie of Paule, which brought nothing with him, but the pryntes of rodde and whippes, and being driuen out of so many Cities, was of no estimation in the worlde. Therefore the hystorie of the conuersion of Athens, is most worthy to be considered,

the

The pryncipe
of Athens.

the fyrst part whereof Luke rehearseth in this place, declaring fyrst what Paule did there, next howe his doctrine was receyued, fyrst preached of most men in the Citie; when he fyrst preached: we will speake of eche of these things in order.

Paule abyding at Athens for the comynge of Silas and Timotheus, walked in the meane season rounde about the Citie, considering their maners and vsages; in so much that he pretermitteth not the temples, but goeth into them, and betweth them, as by his oracion hereafter shall appeare. And perceyuing the greatest Citie that he had, as yet seene, so gyuen to Idolatrie and drowned therein, wareth feruent in the spirite, misliking that Gods religion was in such wise prophaned. For God is offended with no sinne moze then with ydolatrie. And the mindes of the godly are most prouoked when they see the same, because they holde nothing moze deere, then the glorie of the soueraigne God. Hereof came it to passe, that when Moses sawe the golden Calfe, almost forgetting hymselfe, he brake the Tables of the lawe, and beate the Calfe vnto powder, and throweth it into the water, to the intent the ydolaters might drinke, and let downe their Calfe into their belly. Elias incensed with lyke zeale, kylled the priestes of Baal with his owne hande, whome Iehu directly followed, and is in holy scripture commended therfore. The scripture teacheth vs, that Iosias with lyke zeale burned the bones of the ydolaters vpon their owne aultars, that all men might perfectly see the indignitie of such wickednesse, what shall we saye of the Prophetes, which scarce bled moze force of boyt and eloquence in any thing, then in speaking agaynst ydolatrie and ymages. For then spared they neyther earnest nor game, to blase and deface a thing most hatefull vnto God. Their contumacie and stubbornesse therfore at this daye is much to be marueyled and wondered at, that will be taken for christians and gossellers, and yet holde with ymages, and fyght for them agaynst the brethren, that professe the fayth of Christ, and by odious names call them, whose zeale is commended by so many testimonies of scripture, and examplers of holy men, fyghters agaynst Images, and Image breakers. In the meane season, Pauls example teacheth vs, that all they which will fruitefully and with commendation traueyle in Christs quarrell, and in the kingdome of God, haue neede to be indewed with zeale. For where impietie is a verie obstinate and tough euill, it can neuer be pulled vp, without verie feruent zeale. Let the example of Christ stirre vp in vs this zeale, who seing his fathers house turned into a market place or fayre, as one that had forgotten his accustomed myldenesse, made a whyp of such cordes as were next his hande, and drane these wolcked marchauntes out of the Temple, calling to the disciples mindes that saying of Dauid: the zeale of thine house hath euen eaten me vp. Here the consideration of the Lords prayer, putteth vs in minde of our duetie, the chiefe petitions toherof are, that the name of God should be sanctified, and that his kingdome should come. But howe shall they with vnfayned mindes praye for these things, whome no unhallowing the name of God, and ouerthrowing of his kingdome toucheth or moueth? Therfore these hollow hearted people, which in handling of religion, are neyther hore nor tolde, and contrary to the saying of Elias halt on both sides, gaping to get great praise, while they be addict to no side, but are a lyke friendly to all partes, are not to be

Paule taketh
occasion to
preach at
Athens.

Iohn 2.
Psal. 68.

Apoc 3.
Paule disputeth at
Scholes about
religion.

Exod. 4.

Heb 4.
Jerem. 23.

After what
manner Paule
taught at
Scholes.

heard or regarded. Such sometime were y^e people of Laodicia, whom Christ threatneth, he will spew out of his mouth. But to returne vnto Paule, doth he fret & disdain within himselfe, because of y^e ydolatry y^e he seeth. Nay, he mindeth how to reforme this great Citie, being both a straunger, & of no name amongst them. Forthwith therfore he reasoneth of true religion, and beginneth to preach Jesus Christ. But I pray you how many things were there, to haue kept him from this doing, if he would haue yielded to the reasons of the flesh: for he mought thus haue thought, wilt thou be so bolde in so notable a citie, to improve that religion, which is of so many yeres antiquity, & established with such prosperous successe, & glorious victories heretofore: wilt thou haue to doe with men of such fyne wits, and so indred with disputations, hauing scarcely learned the principles of their Philosophie: knowest thou not, howe odious, and daungerous all alterations are, but chieflie those, wherof straungers & forreyners are the authors, whom common reason and sence forbiddeth to be curious in other mens common weales: These and insynite such like thyngs, it is to be thought recourred to Pauls minde, because he was a man which by long experience, had learned what was meete in euery thing to be done. But leauing all these reasons, he setteth boldely on the matter, teaching them that are occupied in Gods vocation by his example, to admit no reasons of the flesh, that might procure them from doyng their dutie. For if the Prophetes and Apostles had bene ruled by such reasons, neuer shoulde anye of them haue done his dutie, but rather lyke Ionas, they shoulde haue provided for themselves, to haue escaped by the sea. For we see Moses strave agaynst Gods commaundement, and refused the charge, as long as he followed his owne reason, and compared his impediment of speach, and lacke of skill, with Gods commaundements. Let vs consider therfore that all thinges depende vpon Gods will and pleasure, and not ours, who can easily make the way plaine for them that walke in his calling. For he is a sharpe double edged sworde, piercing euen into the marrowe: he is a deuouring fyre, and deuiding the very stones. Being therfore encouraged herewith, let vs boldly enterpryse whatsoeuer god commaundeth vs, leauing to him the successe of the matter, which cannot be other than ioyful vnto such as folow his conduct & leading.

Furthermore, Luke declareth the order that Paule followed in setting forth the kingdome of Christ among the Athenians. First he reasoned with the Iewes, touching that matter, because he knewe they woulde the more easily giue eare vnto him, if he brought Moses and the Prophetes. This done he taketh those to instruct which had tasted of sincere fayth and religion by keeping company with the Iewes, but yet were not fully enformed. And hauing nowe layde this foundation, he talketh with euery one he met withall in the market, and went so farre that the Philosophers, wherof the Citie had abundance, beganne to dispute agaynst him. And among diuers sectes of them, the Epicures and Stoikes chieflie encountred with him, who being of contrary opinions, one to another, coulde yet agree together, to set vpon the Minister of truth. For the Epicures being the enemies of all wisedome and good learning, did set perfyte felicitie in pleasure, yet honest pleasure (as they sayde) as which conteyned in it quietnesse of mynde, and health of body: but climbing no higher than this, they were authors of most absurde opinions which sprang hereof. For whete the feare of God,

and

and consideration of the lyfe to come stycketh mennes consciences in dread, and maketh all worldly things vnpleasant, they denyed the prouidence of God, and also the life to come. For they fabled that God walked bype and dwtone from one side of heauen to another, and had no regarde of mortall mennes affayres, and that the soules died aswell as the bodies. Insomuch that they bled this Sardaniapalus like saying: Eate, drinke, make mery without any measure, for after death there is no pleasure. The Stoikes vtterly differing from them, taught all felicitie and blyss to stande in vertue: whych opinion though it seeme plausible and godly, yet it pulled men from God, as much as the Epicures did, because it taught men to seeke felicitie, in the merites of their owne workes. Agayne, because they perceyued the studye of vertue was disturbed and troubled by affections, they woulde haue the followers of felicitie to be boyde thereof, so that neyther they shoulde reioyce in prosperitie, nor shewe any signification of sadnesse in aduersitie, making of men stones and stockes, deuoyde of those naturall motions and affections, where by parents and chyldren are ledde one to loue another. Furthermore, by a certayne concatenation and connerion of causes, they imagined a fatall necessity or destiny, wherunto they made god also subiect. These things teach vs with whom Paule had to doe, and also admonish vs, who are at this day & euer haue bene the enimies of the gospell, and of true doctrine. For although in times passed, the names of Epicures and Stoikes were in vse among the gentiles only, yet were there among the people of God that were of their opinion, & be also in these daies. Surely, Nabal sometime among the Jewes sayd: There is no God, and Dauid testifieth there were innumerable other of the same opinion. Psal. 14. & 53. Such were they also that sayd: The Lord shall not see, neyther shall the God of Iacob regard it. Touching the later times (in the which we are) there are propheties extant both of Christ & the Apostles, which evidently teach vs that Epicures trade and sect shal reigne among vs. For Christ saith: As it came to passe in the dayes of Noah, so shall it be in the daies of the sonne of man: they did eate and drink, they married and were maryed, euen vnto that same day that Noah went into the Arke. &c. And Peter prophesieth that there shall come mockers in y later days, which shall walk after their owne concupiscence, & saye: where is the promise of his comming? for since the fathers died, all things continue in the same estate. &c. And such we see euerywhere now a dayes, which although they directly professe not Epicures opinion, yet liue they so, y every man may easily perceiue, they beleue there is neyther God, nor life to come. And they cannot abide the light of the Gospell, because by it, as Christ sayth, their euill workes are reprobued. In like wise may the Stoikes opinion be founde in all ages. For this opinion helde the Phariseyes sometime among the Jewes, who as they trusted in the ryghteousnesse of their owne workes, so were they the greatest enimies of Christ. This sect (as we sawe in the .xv. Chapter) bredde great disquietters in the Primitive Church, mingling the lawe and the Gospell together, and the merites of workes with fapth. In the dayes of the fathers and Doctors, sprang the Pelagians, the maynteyners of the same doctrine. And if a man woulde search for the lyke in our age, he shoulde fynde the Monkes, whome we may truly call the sworne Disciples of Zeno. For beside that, they ascribue felicitie vnto their owne vertues, they teach also and earnestly cract such indolencie and want of grieve, as the Stoikes did, and go about

Psal. 94.

Luke. 17.

2. Pet. 3.

Iohn. 3.

to

to pull hypp by the rootes those affections which Nature hath sowed in the minde of man. For what else doe they, whyle they commaunde parentes to cast of their owne children, and to penne them bp in monasteries, while they also teach the children, to put alway all the loue and care of their parentes, and to addict themselves wholye to Monastike rules? It is knowen both to Barbers and bleare eyed (as they say what hard and vnwoorthy things, eyther to be spoken or belæued, they beate into tender mindes. Such as these are, must nedes be enemies of the Gospell, which accuseth and condemmeth these madde and furious errors. But we must not therefore gyue place vnto them, but rather according to Paules ensample, stryue earnestly agaynst them. And what waye we must so doe, we are taught by the same ensample. For it is no doubt but the Philosophers defended their matter with quapnt fallacies, and many wordes. But Paule auoyding vaine contention of wordes, setteth before them Iesus Christ onely, and his resurrection, declaring that these two things are sufficient to conuince all the dotages of Philosophers and Heretykes. For if God sent Iesus Christ into the worlde to purge the sinnes of men, and to saue mankynde, neyther can the opinion of Epicures, Stoikes, nor Iusticiaries stande, which eyther saye God regardeth not the things appertaining to man, or attribute saluation to the merytes of our workes. Agayne, if there be a resurrection of the deade, there must nedes followe another lyfe after this, and therefore it is most folly to set felicitie in the pleasure of this present worlde. This might be extended to all sectes and heresies, but it may suffyse to admonishe you, that all fayth and saluation is so conteyned in the knowledge of Iesus Christ, and the article of resurrection, that whosoever is well instructed herein, is easily able to confute all maner of heresies. Therefore the order of our saluation is playne, & needeth not much demonstration of wordes and vayne quiddities of Sophistrie. They that in times past coulde boldly hyge this way, did easily get the victoery of all heretykes, were they neuer so subtile witted. It seemeth good to me in this place, to shewe what Sozomenus repozieth to haue chaunced to a certayne Logitian, very expert in Dialecticall quiddities, in the counsell of Nice. Where as this Logitian euery day gaue newe onsets vpon the Bishops, who both in the affiance of the dexterity of their wit, and skyll of Logicke, dysputed with him, and none of them coulde get any holde or aduantage of him: a certayne simple man of nature, which knewe nothing but Iesus Christ and hym crucified, toke hym in hande, and sayde: Philosopher, in the name of Iesus Christ hearken vnto the truth. There is one God which made heauen and earth, and gaue lyfe vnto man made of the slyme of the earth, which created all things aswell inuisible as visible by the power of his worde, and established and made fast the same, by the sanctification of his spirite. This worde and wisedome, which we call the sonne, pitying our misery, was borne of a virgin, and by suffering of death, hath deliuered vs from eternall death, and by his resurrection hath purchased vs eternall life, whome we wayte for to come, to be the iudge of all our doings. Beleueest thou this is true, o Philosopher? Then he as one that had neuer learned the skill to denye a thing, I beleue it, sayth he. And turning about to his Disciples, and to all that hearde him, sayth: As long as the matter was debated by wordes, I set wordes against wordes, and by arte and skill of speaking, ouerthrewe that was spoken: but when in steade of wordes, vertue or power came out of the mouth

This storye
is written in
Sozomenus
1. booke and
3. chap. But
this author
hath folowed
Ruffinus, re-
poziing the
same in the 2.
booke of the
Ecclesiasti-
call storye and
3. chap. there
shalte thou
reade it tolde
with some
more circum-
stances.

of the speaker, wordes coulde no longer preuaile against power, nor man was not able to stryue against God. &c. So mightye is the playne and vlearned confession of Christ, which whosoever blendeth with the subtiltye of Philosophers, make it very weake and feeble, as maye evidently be sene in the schoole Doctors. But this conspiracie of so many diuers sectes agaynst the truth, teacheth vs mozeouer howe impossible it is to preach the doctrine of the Gospell vnto the world without contention, forasmuch as the wisdom of the worde is contrary to it, wherevnto so euer it incline, whether it banish or embrace vertue. Therefore they are in deede to be laughed at in these dayes, which woulde haue vs performe that, that neyther Christ nor hys Apostles coulde performe.

It remaineth that we declare howe the Athenians receyved Paules doctrine, where we see two sortes of men are bewrayed. One sort are such as receyue the worde with rayling, saying: What meaneth this babler or tryfler? And these men are to be founde among the professors of wisdom. So benefyt is the wisdom of man, to perceyue the kingdome of God, that whatsoeuer is preached of Christ and lyfe everlasting, it seemeth to hym foolishnesse. Here hast thou what to aunswere those men, which now a dayes object vnto vs the authoritie of wyse and great men, and all the pryde of the worlde. For if these things shoulde take place, Paule vndoubtedly had had the ouerthrowe among the Athenians. The other sort is curious menne, which supposing that Paule preached newe Gods or halfe Gods, toke and brought him vnto Mars his streete, to p end that he shoulde there openly giue account of hys doctrine. Therefore there gathereth about him an infynite number of ydle persons aswell Citizens as forreyners who (sayth Luke) had naught else to doe every day, but eyther to heare or tell newes. Thys thing God did permit so to come to passe, bicause he woulde haue hys sonne preached in the most famous place of all the worlde. In the meane season, this place teacheth vs, what condicion the Gospell is in, in this worlde. For eyther it is most dishonestly despyed of manifest enimies, or else lyght men of behauiour abuse it as dishonestly to serue their affections, whych if they perceyue succedeth not after their minde, then they become also open enimies thereof. And bicause these things haue thus fallen out in all ages, no man ought to be offended hereat, but rather to followe Paules constancie, and not to care one Bodkin for the lyghtnesse of this world, but wpyth a strong fayth to trust in Iesus Christ our sauour, who though he be reiectd of those which will seeme to be builders of Gods Church, yet is he become the heade stone in the corner. To him be prayse, honoz, power, and glorie, for euer. Amen.

Howe the Athenians receyved Paules doctrine.

The. Cxvij. Homelie.

PAULE stood in the midst of Mars streete and sayde: yee men of Athens, I perceyue that in all things you are to superstitious. For as I passed by and behelde the maner howe you worship your Gods, I founde an Altar, whereon was written, vnto the vnkowne God, whome you then ignorantly worshippe, him shewe I vnto you: God that made the worlde, and all

that

that are in it, (seeing that hee is Lorde of heauen and earth) dwelleth not in Temples made with handes, as though he needed of anye thing, seeing hee himselfe gineth lyfe and breath to all men euerywhere.



The Apostle Paule in the fyrst to the Corinthians sayeth: wee preache Iesus Christ crucified, vnto the Iewes an occasion of falling, and vnto the Greekes foolishnesse. For where the wisdom of the fleshe, looketh onely vpon the thinges before hir eyes, and perceyue not the mysteries of Gods spirite, it cannot seeme but a most foolish thing vnto hir, if a manne seeke saluation in Christ that was crucified and openly shamed. This thing Paule founde true, aswell at Athens, as in other places. For where as in that Citie he preached Christ among the wisest men that were in those dayes, they giue so little eare vnto him, that it appeareth he scarce preuayled any where lesse than there. For some of them rayled at his doctryne, and clapped their handes at it, other of curiositie frame and apply it to their assertions. In the meane season, in so great a corruption of menne, appeareth the wonderfull wisdom of God, which coulde so well vse the naughty affection of most curious men. For by this occasion it cometh to passe, that Paule being brought out into Mars hys strate, as into a publyke stage of the whole worlde, preached the Gospell of Iesus Christ. The argument of hys Sermon was, to bring the Athenians from superstition and Idolatry, to the honor of the onely true God, through Iesus Christ. First therefore he friendly reproveth them, and accuseth them of their ouermuch superstition. After that he reasoneth of God and of the true religion, nycking their foolishnesse, which thought God coulde be worshipped in Images, or in any other inuentions of man. At length he cometh nearer vnto Christes cause. Yet at this time we will intreate but of the fyrst part with some other poyntes annexed to the same.

The argu-
ment of Pau-
les sermon.

1. The be-
ginning with
insinuation.

His beginning is very brieue, wherin he artificioosly insinuateth hymselfe, and comprehendeth both the proposition and summe of his sermon. He calleth them men of Athens, because they esteemed it to be a very honorable name, as the Orations of Demosthenes and diuers others declare. In the olde tyme they were ignorant of those ambitious tytles, wherewith nowe a dayes proude and bayue men reioyce to be made madde and drunken, which thynke all glory standes in the beautie of such names. Furthermore, he insinuateth hymselfe very friendlye into their mindes, least they myght be offended woth the beginning of his talke, and so refuse to heare him. For he sayth: I perceyue you are ouermuch giuen to superstition. Your wisdom and policie is euerywhere commended, but in religion you seeme not onely ouercurious, but also vncertaine of all thing, so that therein you seeme to haue least knowledg wherin you shoulde haue most. And because no man shoulde reprove hym of lying, he proueth his saying by the publike superstition of a certayne aultar in that Citie. What the sayde superstition was, diuers haue gone about curiouslye to search. The Greeke Scholes make mention of one Philippides, whose hystory they shewe, and say the inscription was thus. *Θεοῖς ἀσιαγ, καὶ εὐρώπης, καὶ ἀφρικῆς, ἀπὸ ἀγνώστου καὶ ξένου.* That is to say: To the Gods of Asia and Europa, and Aphrica, to the vn-

knowne

knowne and straunge God. Nowbeit, I suppose it was onely but such as is of Paule reported. For he might haue bene suspected for a forger and false reporter, if he had recyted the superscription wherein they reposed so great holynesse, otherwyse than it was wrytten. But it behoueth vs chiefly to consider Pauls intent and purpose, whych was to proue that the Athenians had no certayne religion wherevnto to stande, but wandred vpp and downe in a maze of opinions and superstitions, being not contented wth the Gods of the Gentyles, and of their owne country, but also worshipping an vnkowne God. And vndoubtedly the wyser sort were not a little moued and touched with hys sayings. And therefore wythout holding them longer in doubt, he promyseth to teach them y knowledge of that true God, whome as yet they knewe not. It is very worthy to be considered howe the Athenians erred in religion aboue all other Nations, being yet the wysest and best learned of all others. For their Citie flowed in the most subtile professors of Philosophy, whom (as we erewhile sayd) students from all partes almost of the worlde came to heare. This example teacheth vs howe fowly they are deceyued, which will not suffer youth to studie diuinitie, befoze they are euen drunken in the Gentyles Philosophie, and made vtterly vnapt to the obedience of the Gospell: where notwithstanding no kinde of persons moze profyte therein, than those which abandon the pregnancie of their owne witte, and submitte all their vnderstanding to the obedience of fayth. Moreouer, let vs marke in this place, howe the Athenians are here chiefly accused of false religion, bicause they worshippe an vnkowne God. For hereby Paule proueth that they haue nothing certaine in their religion. Herby it appeareth that religion cannot stande without the true knowledge of God. For not onely Paule but Christ also bseth the same argument, agaynst the Samaritanes: where (as it were) with one blowe he stryketh downe all their religions, saying: you worship you knowe not what. For the whole Scripture teacheth vs, that religion consisteth chiefly in true fayth and inuocation of God. For without faith it is impossible for any body to please God, or to come vnto him. And God requyrez this worship chiefly of vs, that in our troubles we shoulde aske helpe and deliury of hym. But vnlesse we be inspired with the knowledge of Christ, we can neyther beleue in God, nor call vpon him, which thing Paule teacheth by an elegant and feate gradation. He that calleth vpon the name of the Lorde (sayth he) shall be safe. But how shall they call vpon him in whome they beleue not? How shall they beleue, vnlesse they haue hearde. &c. Beside this, they that knowe not God truly, turne to the imaginations of their owne reason, wherein it appeareth evidently there is no certaintie, by this one argument, that eyther they themselves dayly haue newe deuises, or else embrace the deuises of other men, according to that saying of Christ: Whosoever drinketh of this water (materiall and drawen by his owne strength) shall thirst againe. &c. Examples to proue the same are euerywhere extant. For the same that we heare the Athenians did, foolishly worshipping such a God, as by their publike inscription, they confessed they knewe not, the same we reade, hath come to passe vnto all men. For thinke we the Gentyles woulde haue chaunged the glorye of the immortall God, into the ymage of a mortall man, or else into a brute beast, if they had knowne him truly? Woulde they euery daye haue receyued newe maners of honouring him, borrowed of forren Nations?

Err. i.

Woulde

The Athenians are moze superstitious than other Nations.

There is no religion where the knowedge of God is not.

Iohn. 4.

Hebr. 11.

Psal. 50.

Rom. 10.

Iohn. 4.

Rom. 1.

1. Reg. 18.

Esay. 29.
Math. 15.

2. Paule teacheth the true knowledge of God.

The religion in Temples is a vaine thing.

Woulde they haue thought, by acte of Parliament, to haue confyrmmed, or disanulled their Gods, and their religion, as Tertullian in his Apology testifieth the Romaynes did: What a foolish saying of the shipmayster was that, which bade Ionas call vpon his God, if happly he would heare them, seeing they had called on their other Gods hytherto, altogither in vaine: But that that was thought a foolishnesse in the Gentyles, the same Elias vpbraideth the Israelites with calling vpon Baal. And God many times complayneth howe the people multiplied and encreased their Gods. And we can confesse that all these people offended in times passed. And yet fewe acknowledge with their hart, that the same hath many yeares bene done, and is yet done in the Popes kingdome. For what certaintie is in that religion, where the Pope e uery day maketh newe gods and Goddeses: Where e uery daye newe kindes of rytes and ceremonies are deuised: Where the deade can not be in rest and safetie, bicause the insatiable auarice of Priestes exacteth tribute of them, sayning that their soules are tormented and purifyed in the fornaue of Purgatorie: Is there not an vnknowne God worshipped amonge vs, the God Maozim, as Daniel sayeth, whome all our fathers knew not, which eyther is made of bread, or chaunged into breade: Would God men woulde nowe a dayes expende these thinges, and learne what a miserable case it is to want the lyght of truth. For whoso lacketh this lyght, are both ignorant themselues of all things in religion, and lose their laboꝝ before God, which neyther can nor will be worshipped with mans traditions. Let vs therefore harken vnto Paule and the Apostles, whome God ordeyned to teach the blinde worlde, his true religion and worship.

Furthermore, Paule so teacheth al these things in the second part of his sermon, that therewith also he confuteth y errors of the gentiles, wherof sprang those errors, which yet bewitch the worlde. In the meane while, although he had to do with most subtile Philosophers and curious men, yet he disputeth not subtilly of Gods essence or nature (which God himselfe testifieth Exo. 3. is inscrutable) but describeth God by his works, teaching what we ought to beleue of him, and how to worship him. God (sayth he) that made the world and all things therein conteyned, seeing that he is Lorde of heauen and earth. &c. It seemeth he speaketh this agaynst the Epicures, which affirmed the world was from euerlasting, or else that all things came togyther by concurrence and meeting of mores togyther, and that God had no care of worldly things. But Paule sayth that God is the creator and lord of the worlde, and layth this for an infallible ground of hys doctryne, such as no man will denie, but he that is voide of common reason. Herof he gathereth that templary religion, was but a vayne thing, which was of such pryce and authoritie among the Grecians, that they hated the Persians, for none other cause more than for that they euerywhere burned the temples in Grece, bicause they sawe they serued more for superstition than godlinesse. Thus reasoneth Paule. He that is Lord of all things, must nedes be euerywhere. But god as he is creator of all things, so is he Lorde of all. Therefore he is present euerywhere, and so by consequence, dwelleth not in Churches, which are builded with mens handes. But that which is sayde agaynst the Gentyles, which iudged that religion stode in the beuty and furniture of Temples, and vnto them tyed the maiestie, power, and grace of God, the same maketh agaynst all those, which glorying in the honour of the true God, are yet drowned in the do-
tage

tage of this errour. When Salomon had bestowed great costes and treasure in building of a Temple, at length he sayth vnto God: Echold the heauen of heauens, is not able to conteyne thee, howe much lesse this Church which I haue builded? And God himselfe in Esay cap. 66. sayth. Heauen is my seate, and the earth is my foote stoole, where therefore shall this house bee that you will build for me? Ieremie sharply reprehendeth the Iewes, trusting in the religion of their Temple. Yea, Christ sayeth that true worshippers, are not tyed vnto certayne and peculiar places, but sheweth vs that they worship God euerywhere in spirite and in truth. Here therefore are all pilgrimages taken away, in the whych foolish menne, of an heathenish error, suppose saluation chiefly to stande. And yet for all this, we utterly condemn not the vse of Churches. For they serue for outward religion, which is necessary for the profession of sayth, and for the nourishing of concord, and vnitie, whyle we resort thither to heare the worde of God, that is to saye, common prayers, and to haue the sacraments ministred. Wherevnto Temples must be so ordered that we must thynke it vnlawfull to pollute them with any kinde of prophane vsages.

But Paule continueth on in describing of God, saying that God hath neede of nothing. Wherevpon he gathereth that he is not worshipped wth handes, and that religion consisteth not in outward obsequies and duties of men. He proueth the Antecedent, in that he sayth he giueth life and breath vnto all men. By this argument he impugneth the vaine affiance in priests, in whome our Ancestours reposed the chiefe part of religion. It seemeth Paule tooke his argument out of Gods wordes, where he accuseth the Israelites, that thought he was worshipped and pleased with sacrifices. For he sayth: I will take no Bullocke out of thy house, nor hee Goates out of thy foldes. For all the beastes of the Forrest are mine, and so are the cattelles vpon a thousande hilles. I knowe all the fowles vpon the mountaines, and the wyld beastes of the fildes are in my sight. If I be hungry, I will not tell thee. &c. But by this argument it appeareth all popish religion is condemned. For what else doe they in that religion, but being deceyued by wicked superstition, take from the poore, commended to vs by Christ, the duties which they offer to Saintes that haue no neede, yea, which knowe vs not. Yea, the most of their oblations serue for Idols boyde of all senses, or for Priests, that liue wantonly and in ryot. In the meane season superstition hath taken so deepe roote, that it is thought a lesse offence, to kill a man and robbe him, than to take a peece of a bayle from an Idoll, or the aultar, to clothe a poore bodie with. O maners, O times.

But some man maye saye: If God be not worshipped by sacrifices, why did he appoynt them for the people, by Moles and commaunde them? Let vs consider, there were two kindes of sacrifices. The one was expiatorie for sinnes, so called, not for that sinnes coulde be purged by the bloude of Oxen and Goates (for that Paule plainly denieth Heb. 10.) but for that they prefigured Christ, whome all the holy and godly men beleued shoulde dye for the sinnes of the worlde, at a time long before appoynted. They taught vs also, that we shoulde slaughter and mortifye all beastly affections, and bring a contrite heart before God, which Dauid testifieth, is the acceptable sacrifice that God requireth. Another kinde of them was gratulatorie, or of thanks giuing for benefytes receyued. Yet all these for the more part,

1. Reg. 8.

Iere. 7.

Iohn. 4.
Math. 24.God is not
worshipped
wth sacrifi-
ces.

Psal. 50.

Esay. 63.

Wherefore
Sacrifices
serued.Psal. 51.
The sacrific-
es of christi-
ans.

Rom. 12.

Math. 26. 25

Heb. 13.

consisted in bloud, bicause as yet the bloud of Christ was not shed, wherewith only the father shoulde be appeased. This bloude therefore being shed, and the mysterie of our redemption accomplished, there remayned no more sacrifice expiatorye or propitiatorye for sinnes. For Christ his merite is sufficient, and there is no neede of other sacrifice, as the Epistle to the Hebrewes at large teacheth vs. Yet Christians want not sacrifices, but yet vnbloudy, for since the bloude of Christ was shedde, there is no more vse eyther of beastes bloude or mannes, in the things pertayning to the ordinary honoring of God. For they make themselves liuely sacrifices vnto God. They offer prayers and thanks giuing in the name of Christ. They bestow their goodes and money, meate and cloth, and such other duties vpon the poore, whome Christ hath left in his place. They that duly fulfill these things, accomplishe the Christian religion. Let vs therefore holde fast Pauls saying, which assyrmeth that God hath neede of nothing, let vs worship him in spirit and in truth, and bestowe our temporall goodes vpon the poore, which are the liuely Images of God, that our seruice maye be acceptable vnto God, through Iesus Christ: to whome be prayse, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The. Cxviii. Homelie.

AND hath made of one bloude all Nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath assigned before, howe long tyme, and also the endes of their habitation, that they should seeke God, if they might feele and finde him, though he be not farre from euery one of vs. For in him we liue, moue, and haue our being, as certaine of your owne Poetes sayde: for wee are also his generation. Forasmuch then as wee are the generation of God, we ought not to thinke that the Godheade is like vnto golde, siluer or stone, grauen by craft and imagination of man.



That that Paule sought both in all his sayings and doinges, the same he chiefly perfourmed in hys sermon, made at Athens, euen to bring his hearers from superstition and ydolatrie, to the true religion and knowledge of God. This was impossible to be done, errept he shoulde fyrst confute the errors that blinded them. But bicause he woulde not be so long in his talke, he toke the chiefe errors to confute, wherebpon the residue depended. And yester day he disputed against the vaine affiance of Temples and sacrifices, teaching that God was not conteyned within Temples, bicause he was infynite, nor was not worshipped with sacrifices, bicause he had neede of nothing. Which thinges he so handleth, that the same may serue to confute all those which at this daye esteeme religion accordyng to the beautie or magnificence of Temples and oblations. But now he setteth vppon the very heade of impietie, that is to say, feigned Gods, and ymages, & the worshipping of them, of the which he disputeth with great earnestnesse, declaring that it is to shamefull and unpudent an error, to chaunge the maiestie and glozy of God immortall, into miserable men and dumbe Images. And bicause he knewe he had to doe with those which were brought bp in such superstition, whome it was a be-

the harde matter to perswade, he heapeth a number of things together, to make the error seeme the more heynous. And there is no doubt but Paule intreated of the matter at large, although Luke hath noted but the chiefe poyntes thereof, we shall speake of them all in order.

First, he declareth the beginning of man. God (sayth he) of one bloude made all mankinde. For it is manifest, that all men, of what nation and degree soeuer they be, come of Adam. Whereto doth Paule alleage this? We gather two things of these wordes, which make very much for the purpose we haue in hande. The one is, that they which haue but one maker and one beginning, ought not to be deuided in sundry religions, but ought rather to ioyne all their myndes and studies together, to worshipping that one Creator. Therefore he nicketh the leuitie of the Gentyles, which did not onely worship one false God, but imagining there were diuers and manye goddes, marueylously disagreed among themselves, in this one thing, and yet in this agreeing, that they altogether swarued from the way of the truth, Hereof ought a generall doctrine to be learned, howe they offende agaynst the order of nature, which in religion bring in sectes and diuision. For they are authours and occasions that men forgette their beginning, and neglect their maker. Therefore this is a greater offence, than commonlye menne were for. Would god this argument might take place among Christians, who professing one Creator, and one kinde of beginning, and glorying in one Iesus Christ the sauour of all men, doe yet let themselves euery daye be deuided in newe sectes, which pull them awaye from god their creator, and Christ their sauour. And truly it is to be pittied that the authoritie of this argument shoulde be of lesse force now a dayes, among Christian men, than it was in tymes past, among the gentyles. The other thing that Paule gathereth of mannes origine and beginning is, that goddes neyther can nor ought to be made of men, which was an error spreadde euerywhere among the Gentyles. For it was playne vnto all men, that those somtimes had bene men, whome they worshipped now as goddes. For in Creta were kept Iupiters cradell, and Image. Delos was the Ilande of Apollo and Diana. The Citie of Thebe was renowned by reason that Bacchus and Hercules was bozne there. And Venus of the Countrey where she was bozne, was called Cypria, Marce, Thracius, Vulcan, Leninius, and Priapus, Lampacenus. But Paule teacheth vs, it is a foolish opinion, to beleue that they are Gods, which in tymes past had bene men, forasmuch as all mankinde is come of one bloude. But by this argument the worshipping of Saintes is ouerthrowne, whome in the Popish religion it is more eident, are worshipped for Gods, than needeth any long demonstration. For prayers are made vnto them, they are inuocated and called on in mens distresses, temples and aultars are dedicated to them, sacrifice is done vnto them, holys dayes are appointed for them, and the glory of health recouered, is ascribed vnto them. Howbeit, we knowe they were menne, and such men as were subiect to lyke infirmities as we be, as Paule confessed before the people at Lystra. Furthermore, all the Scripture testifieth that they were sinners. And the Apostles according to Christes commaundement, prayed, forgie vs our trespases. &c. aswell as we. Therefore it cannot be, that they are nowe become Gods, and gouernours of the worlde. Yet for all this, we despyse them not, nor yet bereaue them of the honour due to them, we acknowledge

The beginning of man-
kind teacheth
the worshipping
of one God.

knowledge that they were singular instruments of Gods grace, but we as-
sume they had this of the more grace of God, as they everywhere con-
fesse themselves. Wherefore it shoulde be an absurde thing for vs, to sticke
to them, or depende vpon them as Goddes, and not rather after their doc-
trine and ensample, to trust onely in God, through Iesus Christ, whome
the scripture hath set out vnto vs, to be our mediator. Surely we thinke the
Saintes can haue no greater iniurie done vnto them, than to haue the
glory of God which they most earnestly defended, ascribed to them. For they
thought good to maintaine his glorie, yea, with the shedding of their owne
bloude.

The prou-
idence teacheth
vs that one
God ought to
be worship-
ped.

But let vs returne vnto Paule which sayth that menne were not onely
made by God, but also placed by him to dwell vpon the earth. And least any
man might hereof inferre Epicures opinion, and thinke that God had gi-
uen them y^e earth to vse at their pleasure, he declareth that all this commeth
to passe by the eternall decre of Gods prouidence. God (sayeth he) hath ap-
pointed the time and endes of their habitation, that is, God hath appointed
to euery nation and people their countries and borders, and hath ordeyned
times and seasons, according to the decrees of his eternall prouidence, when
men shall be borne, and when they shall die. Therefore nothing commeth
to passe on earth by chaunce, or without the prouidence of God. These thin-
ges doth Paule alleage to this ende, to proue that all people ought to be oc-
cupied in honoring of one God, who hath giuen them all things for their be-
hooft, and by whose prouidence they are gouerned and preserued. Thus he
confuteth the common error of the Gentyles, which had for euery countrie a
God to be their patrone and defender. For the Athenians thought them-
selves in safetie vnder the godheade of Pallas. Ephesus gloried that she had
Diana for hir defender. The people of Cyprus had chosen Venus to be their
Lady and gouernesse. Carthage lined vnder the protection of Iuno. The Ro-
maines trusted in Mars their Progenitor and President. Yea, so farre went
this superstition, that there was no house but had hir peculiar and proper
gods belonging to hir. Which error gate in also among the Christians. For
there was no Citie, but had taken to it some Saint or other, through whose
defence it thought it selfe in safegarde. But Paule proueth that God is the
distributor of all countries, and the onely President of all people, who be-
ing present euerywhere, needeth no Substitute or Vicare to supplie his
rowme. Marke well by the waye, howe Paule attributeth vnto God, not
only prescience, but also prouidence, whereby he gouerneth all Countries
and Nations, by whose ordinance whatsoeuer thinges that are done in the
worlde, come to passe. On his becke dependeth the alteration and mutation
of Realmes, as all the Scripture declareth, but speciallly the Prophecies
of Daniel, concerning the fower Monarchies of the worlde. Vpon the same
prouidence depende priuate mens doings. For God (as Dauid sayth) taketh
vp the simple out of the dust, and setteth him with the Princes of his people. We
haue examples in Saule, Dauid, Ieroboam, Cyrus, Ottomanne, and infinite
others, to let daily examples passe. Yea, Gods prouidence abaseth it selfe
downe euen vnto thinges of small or no regarde, while he careth for the
birdes of the ayre, garnisheth the flowers of the fyeelde, and numbeth the
heates of our heade. Let vs therefore bidde them auant, that acknowledge
in god, nothing but his prescience, and imagine that he is but an ydle be-

holder

Psal. 113.

Math. 6. 10.

holder of the things which are done in this worlde. Let vs rather beleue that all thinges are ordered and gouerned by his prouidence. For as thys maketh much for the godly ordering of our lyfe, so in aduersitie it bringeth no small comfort.

These things being thus premised, he sheweth to what ende men were made, and had the earth giuen them to dwell on, namely, that they should seeke the Lorde. They seeke the Lorde, which are busily occupied in his bo- cation, and in the knowledge of him, searching what his will is, worship- ping him onely, and seruing him from their heartes. And that this is the ende whereunto man was ordeyned, all the Scripture testifieth. And sure- ly it is good reason that they to whome god hath giuen a souereigne power ouer all other creatures, shoulde agayne wholly giue themselves vnto him. Paule maketh mention hereof, to declare that they knowe not, to what ende they were created, and that they were vnworthy to dwell on the earth, bi- cause they had forsaken the true God, and worshipped counterfeyte goddes and dumbe ymages. In this place appeareth the wonderfull corruption of mankind. For if we consider the ende wherefore man was made, it shall appeare he doth nothing lesse, than that he ought to doe. It were our dutie to seeke God, in whome all kinde of blisse and felicitie is reposed. But the most part of men vse rather to followe vnstable riches, vncertayne honours and fylthie pleasures of this worlde. And then that will seeme more religi- ous than other, are gyuen rather to the worshipping of Creatures, than of God, and to impudently go a whozing after them. And this pueritie is so much the more intollerable, bicause all other creatures doe their dutie most diligently, and man alone is most forgetfull of the same.

And least the thing that God requyeth, myght seeme to difficult and impossible for man to performe, Paule by a preoccupation, cutteth away all kindes of obiection. And sayth, that if we seeke after God, we shall fynde hym euen as if we felt hym, meaning that he offreth hymselfe euerywhere to our senses, whyle by his visibie workes he reuealeth to vs his inuisibie power, wisdom, and goodnesse, as he sheweth at large. Rom. i. And sure- ly there is no part of the worlde so abiect, no creature so simple, but it setteth before our eyes the vnspeakable power of God. This appeareth in the rude and ysauncured clottes of earth, which yet haue in them a marueylous force to bring forth fruite. The same we see in the alteration and entercourse of times, in the perpetuall motions of heauen, in tempestes, and in all o- ther kinde of heauenly influences. Yea, beholde well but a little flower, and thou shalt be inforced to wonder at the infynite power, and singular wise- dome of the maker. But bicause it woulde haue bene an endlesse labour, to haue runne thzough all the parcels of the worlde, and such is the blockish- nesse of a number, that they are able to searche nor fynde nothing that is without themselves, God insinuateth himselfe nether into vs, & is not farre from any of vs. For we liue, moue, and haue our being in him, and be euen of his generation and kynne. For who will not confesse, that he liueth by his power and meane, seeing by mans reason it cannot be compassed, howe the infant liueth and is nourished in the mothers belly. Who doth not ac- knowledge the power of the Creator in the marueylous workmanship of mannes bodye, in the proportion and agrement of members, in sense, mo- uing, and the vse of them? Who will denye that we haue our being by his power,

The ende of
mans creati-
on teacheth
vs the wor-
ship of God.

Esay. i.
Ierem. S.

GOD is
knowne bet-
ter by the cre-
ation of man,
than by yma-
ges.

power, seeing we are beset rounde about with so manye daungers, and yet escape them every day: Who perceyue not certaine tokens of godly seede in vs, when he considereth the perpetuall mouings and operations of the soule, his immortalitie, and the whole dignitie of man, whereby he passeth all other creatures: Therefore the dulnesse of man, that doth not acknowledge God, is inexcusable. It is also an absurditie and madnesse, to counterfeyte dumbe ymages of God, seeing we beare about vs the liuely ymage of God. That the Athenians myght the better vnderstande the same, and be also ashamed thereof, he citeth the testimonie of Aratus the Poete, to declare that he preacheth no newe doctrine, such as before tyme had not bene heard, but such as the wyse men in tymes past had learned euen by natures lore, and that they were very grosse and barbarous that had suffered such naturall notices and knowledges to be extinguished in them.

God can not
be expressed
in any ymage

At length concluding the place, he thus inferreth: forasmuch then as we are the generation of God, wee must not thinke that the Godheade is lyke vnto golde, siluer, or stone, grauen by arte or industrie of man. He calleth vs the generation of God, chiefly bicause of the ymage, after which we be made. For as yet, there was no place to speake of the adoption of the elect, before them, which yet vnderstode not the principles of the knowledge of God. The meaning therefore is this. Where God woulde haue his ymage to shyne in man, the Lorde and gouernoz of all creatures, it were to grosse an error, to forge a dumbe ymage of hym, out of any deade thing. For we cannot counterfeyte man, as he is the Image of God, bicause his ymage is in the soule, whose forme and nature, by mannes arte, can not be expressed nor shadowed. How much lesse then, can manne expresse God, in anye Image: He nameth first precious matter, golde and siluer, shewing that this is not able to represent the ymage of God. For howe much soeuer it is esteemed among menne, yet are they frayle thinges and corruptible, but God is incorruptible and euermolde. Furthermore, he speaketh not of the formes and fashions, which man at his pleasure giueth vnto God, but of the arte and industrie of man, as if he shoulde say: Although the singularlest artificers and maysters woulde lay all their heades together, yet are they not able to conceyue in their mindes, much lesse to expresse in any matter or Image, the true Image of God. Hereof we gather, that the Images which are made of God, are very lies, bicause they are not able to performe that they promise. But I pray you, what greater iniurie can be done vnto God, than to make him which is eternall truth, like vnto a lye: What is this else, but to make of God, the Denill, whome Christ calleth the father of lyes: No honest man woulde be contented to be represented, and made lyke vnto a murtherer or Ruffyan, & an honest Matrone woulde much mislike to be pictured in the attyre of an harlot. Shall we then be so bolde, to aduenture to represent God by lyes: It is not without a cause that Lactantius, that eloquent wyter, vttered this sentence, saying: there was no religion where any Images were. Woulde God they woulde well consider this geare, that nowe a dayes holde with Images, who in my iudgement are not the least cause that God sendeth in the Turkes, to reforme the worlde, seeing that Princes cannot abyde to haue Christendome purged of superstition and ydolatrie, by the doctrine of the Gospel. It is our partes to remember our beginning and dignitie, to worship one God in Jesus Christ

Esa. 40. 44

our

our Redeemer: to whome be all power, honor, and glory, nowe and euer. Amen.

The. Cxix. Homelie.

AND the time of this ignorance God regarded not, but nowe byddeth all men euerywhere repent, bicause he hath appoynted a day, in the which he will iudge the world with righteousnesse, by that man who he hath appoynted, and hath offred fayth to all men, after that he had raised him from death. When they hearde of the resurrection from death, some mocked, and other sayde, we will heare thee agayne of this matter. So Paule departed from among them. Howbeit certaine men claue vnto him and beleued, among whome was Dionisius a senatour, and a woman named Damiris, and other with them.



WE haue hearde the fyrst part of Pauls sermon, wherein he hath most diligently confuted the errors of the Gentyles, teaching that God is neyther included within Temples, nor worshipped with sacrifices, wpth great and feruent zeale, inueyed he agaynst the feygned Gods and Images of the heathen, plainly admonishing them that they transgressed the order of nature that worshipped them, and that they were brynnydefull both of the ende and dignitie that they were made for. Nowe let vs lytten to the later part of his sermon, wherein he exhorteth them to repentance in Christ, namely that they shoulde conuert and turne from their impietie and false worship of goddes vnto the true God. In which place bicause of the Epicures which laughed at all kinde of religion, he most earnestly byged the mention of the last iudgement. We will declare eche thing in that order that Paule vttereth it.

First he aunswereth a question, vsed to be moued in all ages, and is at these dayes, euerywhere objected, when the truth is preached: that is to saye, why God hath suffered the worlde, so manye yeares to be seduced. And whether it be likely, nowe at the length, that the truth is disclosed, to a few persons of no name and estimation? But Paule aunswereth these demaundes briezely, howe that God hath hitherto winked at the tymes of ignorance, not bicause he delyteth in ignorance, but bicause so it seemed good vnto him, which appoynteth all thinges according to his iust iudgement: and that the worlde coulde not chole but erre, as long as God hid the light of his truth, bicause men of themselves, haue no feeling or vnderstanding of God. And where he sayth that the truth hydden from the worlde before tymes, is nowe reuealed, he declareth, that henceforth ignorance shall not be excused. It is very worthy to be noted, howe Paule alleaging Gods doing simply and barely, moueth no disputation at all, concerning the causes why God suffered the worlde so long to erre. We must also followe this tracke of modestie, that we wade not to deepe in searching out the causes of Gods iudgements, or that we charge not him with the cause of our vngodlynnesse. For it is euident, that he can do no man wrong, bicause we all long sithence had deserved eternall damnation, and be bozne the children of wrath. It is also euident that he gouerneth all thinges by iust iudgement.

1. In answer
swere to them
that alleage
the ignorance
of their fore-
fathers for
their errors.

Rom. 16.

Math. 13.

And Paule in another place, speaking of the reuelation of the Gospell, sayth, it is a mystery hidden from the beginning of the worlde. Chyrist teacheth the same, saying, that the mysteries of the kingdome of heauen, are not reuealed to euery one. It is therefore a folly, and to malapert and wicked an offence, to call gods dwings to the controulment of mannes reason, seeing he requireth of vs obedience of fayth, and seeing nothing so well becommeth the children of God, as to frame themselves vnto his will, which appeareth in his worde and workes. Furthermore, Paule in this place expresseth the ende of the preaching of the gospell, forasmuch as he sayth, it is declared to euery man, for that they shoulde repent. Therfore it is not ynough to haue heard or learned the gospell, but it behoueth vs to repent vs of our errors, & other vices. The order and course of the whole story of the gospell teacheth vs the same. Iohn the Baptist beginneth with the doctrine of repentance. Then after him Chyrist cryeth, Repent you, for the kingdome of heauen is at hande. The Apostles preach likewise by his commaundement. And in the last of Lukes gospell, he prescribeth the same order of teaching, that fyrst repentance shoulde be preached in his name, and then forgiveness of sinnes. Which order, all this booke, and their Epistles doe sufficiently testifie, they diligently obserued. Therefore they falsly and to impudently call themselves Gospellers, which holde on in their former errors, and licentious followe vice, and will not suffer the Ministers to reprove their maners; which is as though a man shoulde desire of the Physician to maintayne his health, but yet woulde not haue him withstande sickenes, and applye thereto conuenient dyet and remedies. We are taught moreouer, that no man is excused before God, eyther through ignorance of his Predecessors, or times passed. For that our auncestors erred in the ages passed, was through the iust iudgement of God, which dissembled and bare with their errors. But when he reuealeth his will, it is certayne he will no longer beare with their error, but requyeth repentance of all men. Which thing whoso performeth not, are contemners of the grace offered, and therefore deserue most grievous punishments. This thing shoulde they well obserue, that vnder the plausible pretence of forefathers, and auncient superstitionnesse, persecute the Gospell with fyre and sword. But they shall neuer scape the iudgement of God, whereof Paule reasoneth in this present place.

1. He bygeth
repentance
by terrour of
the last iudgement.

Amos. 3.

2. Pet. 2.

For he alleageth the cause wherefore God now reuealeth his worde vnto the Gentyles, saying: for he hath appoynted a day, in the which he wyll iudge the worlde with righteousness. &c. Thus he layeth before their eyes, the auncient bface of God, which neuer punisheth any sinners, but such as are abundantly tolde and warned before. For he can doe nothing, but he fyrst reuealeth the same vnto his seruantes the Prophets. We haue euery where examples not onely in the scriptures, but also in the stories of the Gentyles, so that we neede not here to stande long in rehearsall of them. It is better for vs to consider the order of the last iudgement, which Paule briefly and plainly toucheth. Fyrst bycause of Epicures, & their sectaries, he declareth that God hath appoynted a day of iudgement, because none should hick scornely derpde the mention therof, which thing Peter teacheth vs certayne markers should doe. And that that Paule sayth, the whole consent of scripture proueth. Here vnto appertaine the things spoken in the last chapter

ter

ter of Daniel. Which Christ also so often inculcateth. And as it is sayde in an other place, we must also come before the iudgement seat of Christ. This doth the iustice of God plainely requyre, which coulde by no meanes stand, if that iudgement were not where euery man shall receyue condigne rewarde according to his workes. For in this worlde we see for the most part, that the godly are afflicted without anye renumeration, and the wicked rage and ryot without check. Then he declareth who they be that shall be thus iudged, naming all the worlde, which we in the articles of our faith expresse, by the quick and the dead. Therefore none shall escape that day, but as we sayde before, we shall all come before the iudgement seate of God. For there is no respect of persons with God, neyther can any man bleare his eyes. This thing ought to make great men which are puffed vp in worldly pride, mindefull of modestie and humilitie. Thirde, he declareth the maner and fashion of the iudgement, saying he shall iudge with righteousnesse. Therefore there shall be no place for colours or pretences, but they that haue synned vnder the lawe, shall beare the sentence of the lawe, and they that haue sinned without lawe, shall be condemned without lawe. And euery man shall receyue according to that he hath done in his body. This ought we to remember, when the entisements of sinne, and the fleshe creepe vpon vs, which pull vs from doing our duetie: when also the glorie and riches of this worlde prouoketh vs to sinne. For what shall man giue for the redemption of his life, in that daye, when the most seuerer Judge shall pronounce sentence, according to the tenor of iustice. Finally, he desyneth the Judge, by whome God shall iudge the worlde, verily by the man whome he hath ordeyned. So he calleth Christ, because of his humaine nature, meaning to vse the more tollerable name among the unbeleeving, to the ende he might come by little and little to speake of the mysteries of Christ. It is not without a cause that the scripture euerywhere declares that Christ shall be our Judge. For this maketh very much for the comfort of the godly, when they heare he shall be their Judge, who they knowe is their Saviour and Byshop. For hereof they gather, that he shall rather be a reuenger than a Judge for them, as Iob calleth him. And they are not afrayde of the sentence of damnation at his hande, whome they beleue was offered on the crosse for them. Againe to the wicked it is a great terroz, when they thinke he shall come to be their Judge, whome they haue wickedly contemned. For they shall looke vpon him whome they pierced, and to their perpetuall hindraunce and losse, shall be constrained to abyde his iudgement, whome they would not acknowledge to be their redæmer.

Nowe because Paule hath made mention of Christ, he beginneth to treatate of his mysteries, in which treatise no man maye doubt but he was more prolix and diligent, then is here mentioned. Luke noteth the chiefe pointes onely, which abundantly declare what Pauls oration and doctrine was. They are thre in number. First he sayth he was predestinate or appointed of God, from euerlasting, as is elsewhere sayd. This appeareth by the promises which declare he was ordeined to be the saviour of mankind, euen from the very beginning. Hereof we gather (as Paule otherwheres teacheth) that saluation commeth of grace, without anye our desert. For what man is there which can bragge that he hath deserved from euerlasting, that the sonne of God should be appointed, to be his saviour? Se-

Iohn. 15.
Math. 16.
24. 25.
2. Cor. 5.
Rom. 14.

Rom. 2.
2. Cor. 5.

Math. 16.

Cap. 19.

Zach. 12.
Iohn. 19.
Psal. 2.

3. He preacheth Christ.

1. Pet. 1.

Ephes. 1.

Luc. 24.

Rom. 4.

The effect of
the doctrine
of Christ a-
mong the Je-
hemians.

condly he sayth, that God in Christ hath perfourmed his promise vnto all men, meaning that in him the promises, figures, and prophecies, wherein long agoe saluation was comprised, are fulfilled, wherevnto Christ being ready to yelde by the ghost, had a respect, and sayd, It is finished or perfourmed. And after his resurrection he shewed that so it behoued thynges shoulde be perfourmed, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled which are wrytten in Moses, the Prophetes and Psalmes. Wherevpon we gather, that they all fowly erre, which shewe any newe or other waye of saluation, than in Christ. For what else doe they, but reprove God and Christ of lying? See touching this poynt. 1. Iohn. 5. He that beleeneth not God, maketh him a lyer. &c. Thirdly, he maketh mention of Christes resurrection, meaning thereby to proue, that he is the God and iudge of all men. The which argument he useth also. Rom. 1. Under this also he comprehendeth all the whole businesse of our redemption. For if he rose agayne, surely he dyed. and dyed (as is sayde elsewhere) for our sinnes, but was raysed agayne for our iustification. But bicause we haue oftentimes discoursed of these poyntes, and haue occasion euerywhere to intreate moze of the same, these fewe shall suffice for this present.

Now remayneth the effect of this doctrine, which was diuers and variable, according to the diuersitie of the hearers. For some at the fyrst mention of the resurrection, did mocke and scoffe at it, namely, they of Epicures sect, wherof there are great numbers in these dayes. Other somewhat better than these desired to heare him dispute agayne touching this point, thereby declaring they had somewhat tasted of the truth. There are againe other some, whose hearts God had illuminated by his spirite, to beleue, & openly to ioyne themselues vnto Paule. So euerywhere is fulfilled the saying of Paule, that the Gospell is to some the sauour of death vnto death, and to other some the sauour of lyfe vnto lyfe. Among those that beleued, is Dyonisius accounted a man of great dignitie, as who was one of the number of the Judges called Arcopagite. Also Damaris, a woman by all likelyhode, of great dignitie and estimation, bicause mention is made of hir by name. Wherefore the gospell is neuer preached without some fruite or profyte: and although but a fewe beleue at the fyrst, yet great and famous congregations growe of small beginninges, as hystories declare, came to passe at Athens. It is our duties not to be offended at the paucitie or small number of beleuers, but to embrace with thankfull mindes the gospell of saluation, that it may bring forth in vs worthy frutes, and that we maye attayne vnto saluation through the promises thereof, by Jesus Christ our Lorde: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glorie, for euer.
Amen.

The.xviiij.chapiter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The.Cxx.Homelie.

AFTER this, Paule departed from Athens, and came to Corinthus, and founde a certaine Iewe named Aquilas, borne in Pontus, lately come from Italy with his wyfe Priscilla, bicause that the Emperour Claudius had commaunded all Iewes to depart from Rome, and hee drewe vnto them, because he was of the same craft, he abode with them and wrought. Their craft was to make tentes. And he preached in the Synagoge euery Sabboth daye, and exhorted the Iewes and the Gentyles. When Sylas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paule was constrayned by the spirite to testifie to the Iewes, that Iesus was very Christ.



The Euangelist Luke in the chapter that went before, shewed vs howe Athens was conuerted, a very notable citie, both by reason of the schoule of wisdom therein, and also bicause of the manifolde fame of their religion. Then next vnto this he handsomely ioyneth the hystorie of the conuersion of Corinth vnto Christ, a most rich & a most corrupt City, in which hystory the power of the spirit of Christ, and the efficacie of the gospel, so brightly and wonderfullpe shyned, that Paule called the Church of Corinth the

seale of his Apostleshipe. For as Corinth aswell by reason of hir situation betwene two seas, was very rich and famous, as also for merchandyses and traffike there vsed, so the baytes, entycementes, and number of merchauntes, resorting thither from all partes and coastes, infected the same with mooste corrupt maners, insomuch that the ryotousnesse thereof was nowe noted in publyke proverbes. For when men woulde speake of persons giuen to great ryote and sensualitie, they woulde saye they played the Corinthians. And this was a common saying in all peoples mouthes. Euery man maye not come vnto Corinth. Among other vices, there whoredome chiefly reigned, wherevnto they were so giuen, that in Venus Temple they had about a thousande Damosels and Nunnes for that purpose: and afterwarde enen among them that had professed Christ, there was one which vnlawfully kept company with his stepmother, untill by Paules censure and appoyntment he was excommunicated. Into this Citie commeth Paule

when

1. Cor. 9.

What maner
of Citie Co-
rinth was.

Corinthiani vt
græcari. &c.

when he went from Athens, and that not without the ordinance of God, as the ende and successe declared. For the Lorde which did bouchsafe to saue his elect out of the pumpe of sinnefulnesse, by the preaching of the gospel, had there a great many of people. Moreover, this Citie giueth vs an example both of the goodnesse of God towarde sinners, and also of the vertue or power of the Gospel. For if a man would compare the abiect and base estate of Paule, being but a straunger and vnknowne with the indurate custome of sinne, with the glorious shewe of ryches, with the abundaunce of delyghtes, with the entycements of pleasures on euery side, and with the pompe and pryde of Merchantes, his attempt shall then seeme altogether ridiculous, which would go about to reforme both their lyfe and religion at once. But the thing that seemed ridiculous in the iudgement of the fleshe, wanted not a most prosperous successe giuen by the Lorde. For wythin an yere and a halfe, by the preaching of the Gospel, the spirite of Christ therewith working, Paule set a newe face vpon this Citie, and vniuersallye reformed it: a thing which no labormaker, of howe great authoritie so euer he had bene, could haue bene able to haue perswaded them, so that it is not without a cause that Paule reioyseth so much for the conuerting of this Citie, considering he no where founde a more effectuell working of the Gospel, than there. Which also seemeth to me, to be the cause that Luke is so diligent in describing this hystorie, insomuch that he prosecuteth at large the least circumstances thereof. Which thing in other places, eyther he bitterly letteth passe, or else onely toucheth them lightly, as it were by the waye. This thing ought to stirre vppe also our diligent attention, to consider the same.

Aquilas is
Pauls hoste.

First and foremost he maketh mention of the place where Paule hosted, in the fynding out whereof, I suppose, Paule vsed some great circumspection, because Christ gaue the Apostles a peculiar commaundement, touching the providing them of commodious and fyttie hostes. Paule therefore founde an host, called Aquilas, which was a Jewe, borne in Pontus, who not long before, by reason of Claudius the Emperors proclamation, with his wyfe Priscilla, was fayne to depart from Rome, & to come vnto Corinth. For at that time the state of the Jewes was verie miserable, because the vengeance of God folloved them, being embued with the bloude of the sonne of god in al places. It came to passe further also, that they which denied Christ to be their sauour, were fayne every day to seeke them newe sauours, and to make newe stirres and byzozes, so that all menne worthily hated them. Aquilas therefore being violently caried with the common calamitie of the whole Nation, is also banished, yet not without the prouidence of GOD, which prepared Paule a lodging with him among the Corinthians, and vsed his helpe in laying the foundation of a most famous Church. Thus cometh it oftentimes to passe, that the thing which at the fyrst seemed to vs very greivous and intollerable, is yet at length the cause of great commoditie & profyte. Therefore Paule for diuers occasions taketh vp his lodging with this man. For besides that he was well instructed in the fayth, his fortune was to be banished with others, made him y more gentle vnto straungers, whom they that dwell and liue all their lyfe at home, for the most part contemne. Furthermore, being of the same occupation that Paule was, that is to saye, a sower or maker of tentes, which in those dayes were made of hydes

hydes and skynnes, it was very commodious for the Apostle to dwell with him, because he might by the same trade helpe to get his living. It shall be good to consider yet diligently both Aquilas and Pauls person. Aquilas giueth vs a notable example both of faith and charitie. For being a man of handycraft, and banished, he receyueth the Minister of Christ to harbour in a straunge Citie, by his example reproving the richer sort of dishonestie and shame, which made so litle account of strangers in their owne dwellings, yea, it appeareth by other places, that his hospitalitie was so great, that he had a Church or Congregation in his house. Let them therfore be ashamed of their inhumanitie and tythye niggardenesse, which abounding in riches and peace, haue no compassion on the banished for Christes sake. These shall one day learne to their great grieve, what the sorowes of banishment are, and what an heape of cares persecution bringeth with it. But they which being enflamed wyth the loue of Christ, make much of his seruants, and take them in, shall fynde the Lorde a most thankefull recompencer, who promyseth him a worthy rewarde, that giueth but a cuppe of colde water to any one of hys Disciples. He shall at the last day take whatsoeuer is done for any of his members as done vnto himselfe. Liketowse in Paule are notable and singuler vertues to be sene. For this is an argument of constant faith, that he is not so offended at his coarse lodging, that he woulde therfore forsake Corinth. For he knewe that God vsed to chuse the despyled things of this worlde, wyth the which to set forth hys kingdome to the confusion of them, which seme in their owne conceyte, excellent and singular. Agayne, he exerciseth loue and equitie, in that he sitteth not ydle in Aquilas house, but layeth his handes to worke, and getteth his lyuing honestly. Which example, as it is worthy of singular commendation, so doe they naughtily apply it, which by the same exact of all Ministers, to labour with their handes, as though it were not meete for them, to liue of the ministry of the worde. For Paule laboured not, because he thought it vnlawfull for any to liue of the stipend of the Church, but for that there was yet no church at Corinth gathered, of whose stypende he was able to liue. In the meane season, he thought he woulde not burthen those first frutes of a Church, gathered in Aquilas house, whose substance and goodes were not verie great. Afterwardes, when the congregation was growne to a full Church, he woulde not vse hys ryght and libertie, by reason of the naunderous reportes of certayne false teachers, which sayde that he and such as he was, laye in wayte to enrich themselves by other mennes goodes, and therfore they taught for naught. For this cause woulde Paule in no case be inferior to these fellowes, thinking it better for a season to waite his dutie, than by to hastie calling therfore to bring the Gospel in suspicion. Yet he sayth he robbed other Congregacions, to preach vnto the Corinthians freelye. And he confesseth that the Philippians releued him with money which they sent him. By this example of Paule our masking Bishoppes are reproued, who lyving in ryot lyke Persians vpon the goodes of the Church, doe no letynce to the Church at all. And not these onely, but certayne belly Godes also that glozy in the name of the Gospel, and yet are giuen altogether vnto couetousnesse, shamefully forsaking the Churches, where they might by their seruice doe much good, for a litle lurre and aduantage sake of some greater stypende and wages. Both these sortes shall one daye feele the iudgement

Aquilas is an
ensample of
faith and
charitie.
1. Cor. 16.
Rom. 16.

Math. 10.

Paule getteth
his liuing
with the labo-
r of his
handes.

2. Cor. 11.
Philip. 4.

ment of God, which will not suffer his Church to be so slenderly regarded, for naught.

Paule preaches
at Corinth.

1. Cor. 3.

2. Tim. 2.

Christ is the
chiefe point
of the Apostles
doctrine

But because Paule came not to Corinth to the end to solve Tents, but to set out the kingdome of Christ, it is also declared, which waye he did the same. After his accustomed maner, he frequented the Church on the sabbath dayes. And first he prudently moderated his doctrine, handling it according to the capacite of his hearers, as he otherwheres confesseth, saying, he fedde them with mylke, because as yet they coulde not awaye with stronger meate. Thys order Luke expresseth, by this worde perswading, to declare that he did crape, as it were within his hearers, for feare of offending them at the begynning. And verily it is to be thought that he proceeded in that order, that he bled at other tymes. He knewe the Jewes were ledde with a preposterous zeale of their lawe, and that they sought salvation and iustification in the workes thereof. He taught therefore, that all men were sinners, and that they were not able of themselves to satisfie the lawe. Thereby it was easily to be gathered, that an other must be sought for, by whose merite men might be saued. Which was a most commodious waye, to come vnto the mysteries of Christ. Let all Ministers of the word of God, and his Church imitate thys example of Paule, least whyle they haue no consideration of their hearers, speaking all thinges in a confused order, they driue them from the kingdome of Christ, whome they myght wyne, vbling the matter modestly and prudently. Surely he requyeth such a Minister of the worde, as can breake or deuyde the worde of truth, in due order and rightly. And Christ requyeth of him not onely trustinesse, but also prudence. But least any man might thinke, that Paule fedde them still with mylke, Luke wyrteth that at length, vpon occasion offered, he more earnestly handeled Christes cause. For when Silas and Timotheus were come out of Macedonia, he beganne to pull all his wyttes togyther, epyther for that he heard the Gospell had good successe among the Macedonians, or else for that he was troubled in his minde with the miserable case and blindenesse of so famous a Citie. For whose heart would not be moued, to see so notable a Citie running headlong into hir owne mischiefe and destruction, and to see the ignorance of such a sort of men so miserably deceyving themselves. Surely what ever that constraint of Paule was, it is certaine, that he beganne more earnestly to be incensed by the holpe ghost, and to preache and testifie to the Jewes more openly, that Jesus the sonne of Marie, was the Messias and Christ, that is, the sauour of the worlde, that was promysed, by whose onely merite, we are delyuered from the curse of the lawe, from sinne, and from death. Thus let Ministers prepare them away prudently, that at length they may ware feruent in setting forth Christ and maintayning his doctrine, that they cloke not their fearefulness with the pretence of modestie. Againe, it appeareth that Christ is the chiefe marke and Butte of the Apostles doctrine, whose wytnesses they were chosen to be. Peter in the Sermons that are before gone hath taught vs, that in hym onely is all our salvation contepned, Paule afterwarde wytyng to the Corinthians, confesseth that he knoweth nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Iohn sayeth that whatsoeuer is wyrtten by the Euangelistes, serueth to this ende, that we shoulde beleue that Jesus is Christ, & by beleefe, attaine to lyfe everlasting, we must therefore be contented

ted with the same. For it is not lawfull for any man, to chalenge to himselfe any moze knowledge of saluation, then the Apostles did, which had Christ to their scholemaster, and his most faythfull spirite for their counseller. Wherefore let vs all know Christ onely, which is our king and only priest, who dying for our sinnes, and rysing againe for our iustification, hath redeemed vs, and made vs kings and priests to his father. To him be praise, honoꝝ, power, and glorie, for euer. Amen.

The.Cxxj.Homely.

AND when they sayd contrary and blasphemed, he shooke his rayment and sayde vnto them: your blood be vpon your owne heades: from henceforth will I go blamelesse vnto the Gentyles. And he departed thence, and entred into the house of a certaine man called Iustus, a worshipper of God, whose house ioyned hard to the Synagoge. Howbeit, one Crispus the chiefe Ruler of the Synagoge, beleeued on the Lorde, with all his housholde; and many of the Corinthians, when they gaue audience, beleued and were baptised. Then spake the Lorde to Paule in the nyght by a vision, be not afraid, but speake: for I am with thee, and no man shall inuade thee, that shall hurt thee, for I haue much people in this Citie. And he contynued there a ycare, and sixe Moneths, and taught them the worde of God.



Our Sauiour Iesus Christ many tymes testified, that the chiefe cause whye he came into the worlde was to saue sinners. The Apostles being mindefull hereof, vled to preache the doctrine of saluation vnto notable synners, and to bring them into the felloshipp of Christ and his Church. So behoued it to be in the beginning, because none shoulde thinke Christes merite coulde be overcome by any heynousnesse of our sinnes, or should beginne to despayze of their saluation in him. This same may notably be seene in the conuersion of Corinthe. For we heard erewhyle, that it was a most naughtie and corrupt Citie. Yet is Paule sent thither, to deliuer them by the preaching of the Gospell, from the brynke of destruction. And fyrst according to his vsuall maner, he offereth saluation vnto the Iewes, who yet of all others had deserued that God should not regarde them. Who therefore will despayze of Gods mercie, who so earnestly sought the saluation of so hateful a people? Let vs here marke howe the incurable impietie of this people wasstled here also against the long suffering of God, Christ our Sauiour overcoming and triumphing in the myddle of thys sturre and busynesse.

For it is written that the Iewes gaynesayde Paule, plainly bearing witnesse vnto Christ, and at length rayled at him and blasphemed his doctrine. That this was their common vsage, we haue nowe learned by many examples. This wickednesse of theirs is horrible, if we consider eyther what they were in tymes passed, or expende the rage of euill speaking, that they vse agaynst Christ yet to this daye. For who woulde not feare the horror of Gods iustice, seeing he perceyueth no Nation these manye hundreth

The Iewes
withstande
Paule bearing
witnesse
vnto Christ.

A a a a .i.

yeares,

peares, such miserable vessels of his wrath, as they which sometime were called the fyrst begotten of God, the chosen stocke, and Priestly kingdome of God: It is very worthy to be noted, that they now at length, contrarye and gaynesaye Paule, when he moste plainely beginneth to beare witnesse vnto Christ, where as before this, they had hearde him intreate of the law, and certayne other pointes certayne sabboth daies together, very willingly. For this that was done at Corinth, we see cometh to passe now a dayes euerywhere. They are after a sort bozne withall, that can nicke manifest abuses and errors a farre of, as many vsed to doe in the tyme of Papistry. But as soone as Christ is byged, and his glozy plainly and manifestly defended, then become they starke madde, which before seemed very modest. The cause of this euill is, for that without the preaching of Christ all other reprehensions are but colde, and are of no more weyght than the taulkes of Philosophers, who we may reade disputed with great shewe of learning, touching the studies of vertue, and the miserable condicion of vices. But Christ entring into the hearts of men, cutteth awaye euen to the quicke, all corruption aswell of religion, as of manners and liuing, and therefore the consequences that necessarily followe of this doctrine, seeme to the worlde intollerable. For of this doctrine followeth vtterlye the fall of buying and selling of holynesse. Hereby is the brightnesse of mannes righteousnesse cleane put out, and all affiance in our owne merites quyte ouerthrowne. The same reprooueth our corrupt maners, and exacteth of vs no counterfeyte or pagiantlyke repentance, but a sincere and perfyte, such as neyther the corruption of our fleshe can abyde, nor mannes power perfourme. It seemeth tollerable ynough vnto the worlde, to reprove an adulterer, a souldier, an vsurer, a drunkerde, and to let him alone in the Church, if he be purged with a frivolous satisfaction, although he followe styll the same trade of lyfe. But if a man thunder out the sentence of damnation agaynst him, by the voyce of the Gospell, and exclude him out of the kingdome of God, bicause he will not repent, this they thinke to be a thing intollerable. This is an euident prooue of our corruption, and that they are in dede the enemies of God, that purposely runne on in sinne, and will not be corrected by the worde of God. For who will not thinke him to be the enemye of God, who despyseth the sonne of God in comparison of his abhominable sinfulness: Agayne, let vs obserue the maner of speach, that Luke blyth: They spake agaynst him (sayth he) and blasphemed. The fyrst degree of vngodlynesse, is to speake against the worde of God. This bicause many doe of ignorance, their error at the fyrst may be winked at. But he that is so led with naughtye and euill affection, to speake agaynst the truth reuealed, being not contented with this fyrst degree or steppe, they commonlye turne them vnto rayling. What these raylings and slaunders were, that the Jewes vsed agaynst Paule, we may gather of those things which we hearde before in the vij. xviij. and xviij. Chapters. By example of these things, we learne that we must resist things at the beginning, least being led at the fyrst with naughtye desires, we feare not to speake agaynst the worde of God, and so at length through contention fall to blaspheme it. And so little by little entangle our selues in that horrible sinne agaynst the holye ghost, and at the last driuen and carped with grantlyke audacitie, fyght agaynst God, the ende whereof shall be none other, but the miserable and euermore lasting destruction

Degrees of
vngodlynesse.

of

of the soule. We haue euerywhere examles hereof.

But what doth Paule now? Goeth he from Corinth, bicause of these obstinate Jewes, so that the wickednesse of a few persons is the hindrance of all: No. But rather bidding these frowarde and wicked persons adewe, he turneth him to the Gentyles. And least he might seeme to doe any thing of heate, or passion of mynde, he diligently obserueth the trade prescribed of Christ. First he shaketh his garments, as we declared he did at Antioch, in the. xiiij. Chap. where may be seene what is to be learned what this ceremonie or doing meaneth. Next, he threateneth them with punishment, declaring that they perished through their owne default, saying: your bloude be vpon your owne heade: from hence I will goe blamelesse vnto the Gentyles. He alludeth vnto the wordes of God written in Ezechiel, cap. 3. and. 33. after this sort: Thou sonne of man, I haue made thee a watchman ouer the house of Israel, that whereas thou hearest any thing out of my mouth, thou mayest warne them on my behalfe: If I say vnto the wicked, thou wicked, thou shalt surely dye, and thou giuest him not warning that he maye beware of his vngodly way, then shall the wicked dye in his owne sinne, but his bloude will I require of thy hande: Neuerthelesse, if thou warne the wicked of his waye, to turne from it, whereas hee yet will not bee turned from it, then shall he dye, bicause of his sinne, but thou hast deliuered thy soule. Vnto these wordes I say, Paule alluded, saying: I haue done my duetie, and sette before you Iesus Christ the onely authour of saluation: but bicause you reiect him, you are culpable of your owne perdition, and I being in no fault thereof, will gette me to the Gentyles. Thus he threateneth them the same that Christ doth, where he sayth vnto the Scribes: The kingdom of God shall bee taken from you, and giuen to a Nation that shall bring forth the fruites thereof. And this that is sayde vnto the Jewes, let all contemners of the Gospell thinke sayd vnto them. For where through the Gospell God offereth vs a remedye against destruction, they must needs perishe through the iust iudgement of God, which wickedly despyse the same. In the meane season, Paules doing teacheth vs, that Ministers of the worde are then blamelesse, when they haue faithfully fulfilled their dutie towarde sinners, by teaching, rebuking, and exhorting them: But if they be dumbe dogges, such as Esay describeth. cap. 56. then shall the bloud of those that perishe be requyred of them, that is to say, God shall make them guiltie of all that bloud that is shedde through their negligence. But the Scripture euerywhere setteth out the horrible guiltynesse of bloude. See Genes. 9. Numer. 35. Psal. 51. &c. We see therefore it is not without a cause that the Prophets and Apostles vse such vehemencie of zeale in their teaching. Paule hauing a regarde herevnto sayde: Woe vnto me if I preach not. And Amos sayth in the thirde Chapter: When a Lyon roareth, who will not be afrayde? Seeing then that the Lorde God himselfe speaketh, who will not prophecie? Finally, Paule goeth into one Iustus house, not for that he hated Aquilas, but for the more credit of his protestation. For it seemeth that this Iustus was a Gentyle, except we shall thinke Paule was fantastical, which woulde forsake a beleuing Jewes house, to go into another Jewes house. Yea, his wordes signify asmuch, from henceforth I will go vnto the Gentyles. Yet there appeareth in Paule a feruent good will towarde his owne Nation. For although he chose him a Gentyle to be his hoste, yet his desire is, to dwell nigh vnto the Synagoge, bicause he would

Paule shaketh
of the dust as
gainst the
Jewes.

Math. 21.

Luc.19.

The conuer-
ſion of Criſ-
pus and the
CorinthiansPaul is
tempted with
feare.

1. Cor. 2.

cloff.

want no occasion to winne the Jewes. Let all Ministers followe this example. For where they are called Pastors and fathers, it becometh them to beare such affection toward those that perishe, as shepheardes doe toward their straye sheepe, and as fathers doe toward their vntoward children. Such affection declareth Christ, when he wept looking on Ierusalem, and bewayled the destruction that shoulde come vpon hit by the iust iudgement of God.

But Pauls industrie and trauayle was not in vayne. For of the Jewes, Crispus the President of the Synagoge, was wonne to the beliefe in Christ, whome Paule writeth that he baptized in the fyrst Epistle to the Corinthians, the fyrst Chapter. Also many of the Corinthians beleued, who not long before, seemed to be drowned in sinne and perdition. And it maye be thought by their baptisme, that they did not feigne a fayth, but that they openly and plainly protested the same. Therefore they want not the blessing of God that labour faithfullye in their vocation, neyther can the vnbeliefe and frowardnesse of others frustrate the promise of God, as Paule in other places teacheth. Rom. 2. As many as fynde they haue grievous and incurable enmyes, may here fetch comfort. Moreover, a notable place followeth, which teacheth vs that Paule in this businesse was comforted by God: where fyrst Pauls person is to be considered, then God who strengthened him with consolation.

It appeareth by this consolation that God gaue Paule, that as a man, he was afrayde. And he sawe euery daye before his face, many thinges to cause him to feare. For he well knewe the incurable rage of the Jewes agaynst Chrystes doctrine. The remembraunce of the daungers he had bene in by their meanes was fresh in his memory. And such corruption of the citie as was daily noted in common Proverbes, gaue him small hope of doing anye good there. Besides, the craftes of false brethren and teachers, of whome he oftentimes complayneth in his Epistles. Yea, he plainly confesseth that he was at Corinth in much feare and trembling. And as farre as we can gather by the worde of God, Paule was minded to leaue the Citie, seeing he had so little hope to doe any good there. We learne by this example, that euen the seruants of God also are subiect vnto affections, and that otherwhyles they are so afrayde, that they forgette their dutie. For this that Paule suffered at Corinth, diuers other founde true to their greater ruine. Abraham the father of the beleuing, after he had forsaken his native Countrey, and shewed a notable proufe of his fayth, being overcome with feare, stayned his good name with a fowle lye, and brought his wife into great perill and daunger. Iacob hauing so oftentimes founde God his ayder and helper, is afrayde to go meete his brother Esau. Moses fearing the tyranny of Pharaon, flieth into Madian. and scarce woulde retorne againe into Egypt at Gods calling. Iosue a valiant warriour, discomfited with one ouerthrowe of his people, declareth the feare he had conceived in his minde, by vnmannerly weeping and mourning. We reade howe Dauid which being but a stripling, overcame Goliath, after he was a man growen, and had gotten many victories, feared oftentimes the threates and attemptes of Saule. Helias whome neyther the sight and tyrannie of Achab, nor furie of the people, coulde withhold from killing the Priestes of Baal, being afrayde at the threates of one syllye woman, which was Iesabel, tooke him to hys heeles,

and

and desired god he might die. What shall I speake of Peter, who being not afrayde of a company of harnessed men, was quite dismayde at the worde of one symple wench, and denyed Christ: Many like examles might be rehearsed, which we repeate not, to the ende to detect the infyrmities and falles of holy men, but bicause the consyderation of them serueth not a little for our instruction. For both we knowe our owne infyrmities thereby, the knowledg wherof maketh vs not to trust to much in our selfe, and we are admonished of charitie, that we rashly condemne not men, which otherwise haue deserved well, if they seeme to doe otherwise than becommeth them. For God will haue the tokens of common imperfection, appeare euen in them also, that we be not to much addicted vnto them, and so forgette the grace of God, which by them had wrought singular workes. In the meane season we must helpe them with our prayers, that eyther they may beware they fall not, or else that they may by Gods grace speedily rise agayne. For this deutie did Christ vse towardes his Disciples, as the Gospell declareth. Luc.22.Iohn.17.

But let vs consider Gods person, which by and by comforteth him being in this feare, although there is no mention made that he did call vppon God therefore. For God doth not onely heare them, which open their desire of minde by crying, but he seeth the secret sobbes and gronings of the heart, and helpeth & comforteth them. And so is it very needefull he should, bicause oft times it cometh to passe, that we are so compassed on euery side with aduersitie, that we are not able in wordes to declare the desire of our hearts. Then is fulfilled that that God promisseth by his Prophet Esay. cap 65. It shall come to passe, that or euer they call, I shall aunswere them, while they are yet but thinking howe to speake, I shall heare them. So the Lorde speaketh to Moses standing by the redde sea: why cryest thou? Yet we reade of no worde he spake. This is a great argument of the goodnesse of God. For as God knoweth whereof we haue neede, so he bleseth to helpe vs in season and time, and although he sendeth vs temptations, to teache vs our infyrmities, and to enflame vs the more vnto godlynesse, yet he tempereth the same with comfort, that we be not vtterly swallowed bp of sorowe. Let no man therefore despayre to soone, seeing God hath infynite meanes, whereby to comfort and helpe vs. And here in this place he thought good to vse both vision and Oracle, both which were very needefull, bicause Paule had no man to comfort him, and sawe many causes which might make him thinke that so corrupt a Citie had no regarde of God. The wordes that God here spake, contayne in them thre poyntes, of euery whereof, we will intreate orderlye.

First, he taketh away the cause of all this euill, where he biddeth him, not to feare. This kind of precept is often times mentioned in the scripture. For so sayth god vnto Moses, being dismayed at the meeting of the king of Basan. To Iosue also being redy to ioyne battayle with y^e syue kings, it was sayd: Be not afrayd of them. And the Lord sayth vnto Ieremie when he called him to the office of a Preacher, Be not afrayde of their faces, &c. Christ also biddeth the Apostles, that they shoulde not feare those which killed the bodye, but coulde not hurt the soule. I omitte diuers places of this sort. The cause why God so oftentimes forbiddeth his seruauntes to feare, is for that there is nothing of more efficacie to pull meene from doing their dutie than feare.

The diligence of God in comforting those that bee his.

proofe of y^e soft:

Reason

Feare is forbidden. Ioh:

Deut. 3.

Iosue. 10.

Math. 10.

Reason

Exod. 18.

Ministers
must speake,
and not holde
their peace.

Reasons and
argumentes
of consolation

i.

Psal. 118.

ij.

feare. For as soon as feare is once conceived in the heart, the light of reason is so blemished, that it cannot see what is needfull to be done, and no deuises or counsels are more vncertaine, than such, as persons in feare and perplexitie take in hande. And if they stande thoroughly in feare, then maketh it men shamelesse also, so that for feare of losse of lyfe or goodes, they committe moste mischieuous actes, and many times they incurre a greater daunger, for the auoyding of a perill present. Because this thing falleth vpon priuate men, howe much more necessary is it that men in publike office shoulde be bolde and boyde of feare: For if these men offende, it is not against them selfe onely, but against other also, whome God hath committed vnto their charge. Which was the cause that the wise man Iethro required boldenesse of minde in Iudges. Therefore God did verie aptly make his beginning of comfort in this place.

In the second part he commaundeth him what to doe. Speake (sayth he) and holde not thy peace. Here no manne must thinke that God vsed any superfluitie of wordes. He ioyneth these two together, because many times diuers speake, and yet holde their peace, whyles they speake such thinges as they thinke no man will be offended with, and in the meane while keepe silence of such thinges which they ought by Gods commaundement to speake. The meaning therefore of the commaundement is, that he shoulde preach the gospell plainly, and dissemble or keepe close none of the thinges contained in the same, although he wist many woulde be displeased therewith. By this let all Ministers learne, that they haue not done their dutie, if they preach the worde of God, except they preach it all, and that plainely, and so applye it vnto euery man, that he maye thinke it spoken vnto him. For as he is an vntrusty ambassadour, which speaketh nothing but that he is commaunded, and yet vttereth not euery thing, but for fauour of some persons, omitteth many thinges: so can he not be iudged to be a faythfull Minister of Christ, that leaueth out neuer so small a portion of the Gospell, to please men with. See what is sayde hereof. Iere. 1. Ezech. 3. and. 33. Math. 28.

In the thirde part he sheweth very graue and effectuell reasons, whereof this is the fyrst: for I am with thee. This one reason ought to be sufficient against all daungers. For whereas God is almightie, they can want nothing with whome he is present. For what are Creatures able to doe against God, without whose power they cannot stande: Therefore Dauid gathereth very probably thus, The Lorde is my helper, I will not feare what man can doe vnto me. And because this promise is generall, and appertayneth to all them that walke in the vocation of God, all menne ought to applye it vnto themselves, and in assiaunce hereof to beare out all the assaults of the worlde couragiously. The seconde reason is, No man shall inuade thee that shall hurt thee. He sayeth his enimies enterprises shall be in vaine. This is a speciall promise which alwayes taketh not place. For many times it commeth to passe, that the godly are entangled in many troubles and grievous daungers, and we reade that Paule was layde hands on manye times, yea, after this he was taken, and brought to Rome by sea and lande, where he ended his life by the sword. And notwithstanding these thinges came so to passe, yet abideth the truth of Gods fyrst promise sure and fast, and god saue those that be his from death, and neuer fayleth them. Wherefore we must walke and holde on in the vocation of god by fyre and

sword.

woorde. The thirde reason is, that he sayth he hath much people in Corinth. By this he teacheth him that his laboz shall not be in vaine, bicause the word of god in the elect and predestinate to saluation, vseth to be effectuell, as is declared in the. xiiij. Chapter. This is verpe notable, that God hath in so naughty a Citie, so much people, and moze than Athens, which thought hir selfe for vertue and wisdom to passe all other Cities. Whereby we gather that they which are openly drowned in sinne, are mozte apt to receyue the kingdome of god, than the Iusticiaries and holy ones that woulde seme to all men to be iust and good. For it fareth herein, as in the sickenneses of the bodie. For as they that are sicke of knowne diseases, doe sooner seeke the phisitions, than they that are diseased with secret, whereof they are ashamed, and can after a sort hyde them: so they that be notozious open sinners, doe sooner receyue the doctrine of saluation, than hypocrites, which swollen with the confidence of their owne righteousness, thinke they haue neede of none other. For where these cannot denye but they are sinners, they of necessity are carefull howe to be saued, and are compelled to seeke saluation in others than themselves. Which is the cause that Publicanes and harlots are preferred before Phariseyes in the kingdome of god. And Christ appointed the doctrine of saluation to beginne with the reprehension of sinners, that laying aside the pryde of our owne righteousness, we myght learne to flie vnto the grace of god. In the meane season it ought much to comfort vs, that the Lorde hath many heyres of eternall saluation in so vntowarde a Nation. For hereby it appeareth that God is neuer without hys seauen thousande, although all menne seme wicked and naught. I. Reg. 19. For such is the certaintie of Goddes Election and Predestination, that they are counted for Gods elect, which are from euerlasting written in the booke of lyfe, although they yet lye drowned in sinne. Euen so Christ calleth them his sheepe, which yet he had not called by outward preaching, nor drawne by inward operation of his spirite, but yet knewe, they were gyuen him by his father, before the foundations of the worlde were layde. And this is a consolation of all other most effectuell, that our sinnes cannot hynder Gods election. For whome he hath predestinate, those in tyme he calleth and draweth, and maketh lyke vnto the ymage of his sonne, and suffereth them not for any thing to be seperated from his loue.

Moreouer, howe great the force of Gods comfort is, appeareth by Paule, which abode a whole yere and sixe Moneths at Corinthe, and there preached the worde of God. Here the patience of Paule and the truth and power of God which preserved his seruauit so long, in so wicked a Citie, is diligently to be considered. He abode so long among these prowde and vnthankfull men, as tyll he had brought those vnto God, which he heard were his elected. What fyercesse and discourtesie they vsed in the meane season agaynst Paule, may easily appeare by his Epistles. This example of Paule reprooueth them, that rashely leaue theyr Churches, as soone as they see all things succede not according to their desyre, we are taught moreover what a painefull thing it is to edifye and buylde the Church, seing we heare that Paule laboured so long at Corinthe, where he confesseth that he dyd but plant onely. Yea, his Epistles declare that there was narde afterwarde of contynuall traueyle and care. Therefore the slouth of some Ministers is very detestable, which suppose behementie of zeale in edyfying

iiij

Math. 22.

The certaintie of election and predestination.

Iohn. 10.
Eph. 1.

Rom. 8.

Paule tarpyeth at Corinthe.

1. Cor. 3.

of

of the Church is but superfluous. Let them all follow Paul's industrie, that by daylie exercise of fayth, we may make sure our election and vocation, and come to the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen, with Iesus Christ our Lorde: to whome be prayse honor power and glory, for ever. Amen.

The. Cxxij. Homelie.

WHEN Gallio was Ruler of the Countrey of Achaia, the Iewes made insurrection with one accorde against Paule, and brought him to the iudgement seate saying: This fellow counselleth men to worship God contrarye to the lawe: And when Paule was about now to open his mouth, Gallio sayde to the Iewes: If it were a matter of wrong, or an euill deece, (ô yee Iewes) reason would that I shoulde heare you. But if it be a question of wordes, or of names, or of your lawe, looke yee to it your selues, for I wyll be no iudge of such matters, and he draue them from the seate. Then all the Greekes tooke Sosthenes the chiefe Ruler of the Synagoge, and smote hym before the Iudges seate. And Gallio cared for none of these things.



Although God sendeth out the Ministers of his worde, as shepe among Wolves, yet he defendeth them with his fauour and protection, so that the wicked enemyes of truth can not doe what they please against them. This Paule found true both at Corinth specially, and at manye other places besides. For being in feare and trembling in the midst of many daungers, & almost swallowed by of feare, God preuenteth him with his comfort, and promyseth him not onely safetie, but also great successe and fruite of his labour and traueyle. And that he promysed him, he perfourmeth to the uttermost, as this present place declareth. For in a tumulte and bypore, where the Iewes raved lyke madde men, when all hope of mans helpe was past, God by his secret power wonderfully saueth and delyuereth hym, so that he taketh no harme. And bycause this is a peculiar and very notable example of Gods ayde and assistance, it shall not be vnprofytable, to discusse euery circumstance of this hystorie.

i. The Iewes
are the begin-
ners of a tu-
mult against
Paule.

Psal. 34.

And fyrst, the begynners of thys trouble are here noted which are the Iewes, of whome seing we haue often times intreated, it needeth not that we say any moze. These men hauing hytherto bene quyet, being kept vnder, and repressed by the power of God, whyle Gallio a newe President of Achaia lyeth at Corinthe, with one consent set vpon Paule, take him & bring him into the market before the iudgement seate of the Liefetenaunt. By which example we are taught, that the promyses of God are not so to be vnderstanded as though God had ordeyned vs to be out of all maner daunger and hazarde. But rather he will haue vs to be inbred with troubles, because it is so requisite for our fleshe, and for the order of our saluation, which is the cause that as Dauid sayth: Many are the tribulations of the iust, but the Lorde delyuereth them from them all. Herevnto are the examples of all those to be referred, which after most large and ample promyses of

God,

God, haue bene tempted wyth most grieuous daungers, God sayth vnto Abraham, I will blesse thee and magnific thy name: I will blesse them that blesse thee, and curse them that curse thee. Yet after this by reason of hys wyfe Sara, he was in daunger, he was troubled with warres, and suffered the great distresse of banishment. And yet for all this God is no lyer, but hys troth is so much the more manifest, bicause he delyuereth him out of so manye and such perilles. The same we might affirme of Moses, Dauid, Ieremie, and all the Apostles, but that we studie to be brieue. Therfore they are greatly deceyued, which so expounde the promises of the gospel, that they by and by reprove the Ministers of lying, so soone as anye crosse or trouble aryseth. Let vs remember that Christ promyseth vs a retribution of those things which we lose in persecution for his names sake, and that all they which will follow him, must beare the crosse, after his example.

Furthermore, let vs in this place obserue the maners and conueyances of the enemies of the truth, that we maye the easilier beware of them. fyrst we see the Jewes seke occasion craftily to doe harme, where vntyll this tyme, they might seme hushie and quyet. For in a whole yeare and a halfe almost they sturred not agaynst Paule. But as soone as they had a new Lieftenant, then they begiune eyther for that they hoped that he was a man boyde of religion and iustice, and therefore the fyttter for their turne: or else for that they thought they might safely make a sturre, vnder a newe officer, who was not as yet acquainted with the state & affayres of Corinth. Therfore that wisdom appeareth in them, wherin Christ sayth they passe the chylzen of light. This teacheth vs, that we must not snozte in securitie, when the enemies of the truth, and those that sometime were our enemies for the truth sake seme to lye still. But rather we must vse the wytte of Serpents against their craftes and enterpryses, which as soone as oportunitie serueth them will burst forth. Wherfore that saying of Ecclesiasticus serueth well to this purpose. Beleeue not thineemie. &c. Next this, the Jewes with one accorde make an insurrection agaynst Paule, which is one other propertie of the wicked. For where through diuersitie of affections, they are alwayes at iarre and hurte yet to set on Christ and his worde, they cleaue togyther lyke burre, bicause they all hate the same alyke. Thus the Phariseyes could agree togyther well ynough with the Sadduceyes and Herodians, when they went about to apprehende Christ. And we knowe howe Pylate was reconcyled vnto Herode, after he had sent Christ vnto him to be mocked. Let no man therefore trust the discordes of the wicked, but let him put all his trust in Christ, the authoz of true vnitie and consent.

But let vs consider the chiefe poynt of the accusation that the Jewes layde vnto Pauls charge. This fellow (say they) counsellerh men to worship God, contrary to the lawe. Their meaning is, that he bringeth in newe manner of worshippings, contrarye to the lawes of God. Nowe all alteration of religion was an hatefull thing vnto the Romaines. And wythout doubt they amplified that fault marueylously, and brought forth the Romaine lawes, as we heard before was done at Philippi, & Thessalonica. But that this was a false accusation, maye be gathered by this one argument, for that Paule preached Christ, which was the ende of the lawe, and in whom were fulfilled whatsoeuer things were coneyned in the booke of Moses and the Prophetes. Yet we see alwayes the true worshippers of God are

Gene. 12.

Math. 10.
Luke. 9.

The properties and studies of the enemies of truth.

Luke. 6.

2. The chiefe matter of their accusation.

accused for prophaners of religion, and yet are there none more earnest defenders and reuengers of the same then they. And here they that are farthest of from all religion, bragge most howe they are the maynteyners of religion, as the Jewes pretende the keeping of the lawe, where they had long agoone ouerthrowne the same with mannes traditions. So the prophane enmyes of the truth now a dayes haue the saintes and ymages of saints in their mouthes agaynst vs, where as notwithstanding it is euident they little set by eyther saintes or their ymages. For if they will defend the honor of the saintes, why doe they not imitate their sayth? Why persecute they their doctrine and wrytings with fyre and sworde? Why call they them heretikes that desyre to follow their steps? If they count ymages so godly a thing, why neglect they the liuely ymages of God? why robbe they the poore to clothe stockes and stones? why burne they christian men to whom Christ hath restored the ymage of God by the price of hys bloude? What else therefore doe these men, but as the Jewes dyd, which vnder a faire pretence of religion, wysshed all religion and truth extinguisht?

3. Gallio refuseth to heare Pauls cause, as a matter not belonging to him.

But what doth Gallio in this bypzoze? Commaundeth he Paule to pleade his cause, or giueth he him the hearing? No. But being about to speake, he interrupteth him, which yet might seeme tollerable, because he pronounced no sentence against him, the matter being vndeclared. But he clarely putteth of the matter from his hearing, saying, it appertayneth not to his determination, speaking most contemptuously of the Jewes religion, as though it had bene a thing consisting onely in bare and vncertaine wordes, or names. The cause of his thus speaking, he seemed to take of the Jewes owne wordes, which by their foolish genealogies and brawles about wordes, caused the gentiles to laugh and scoorne at all their religion. The like thing we see now a dayes in papistrie, whose iuglings and triuolous opinions causeth the Jewes and Turkes to laugh at our christian religion. And woulde God there were not among the professors of the gospell, which by their straunge and queynt questions caused not the vngodlye to scoorne the christian sayth. But as touching Gallio, he commaundeth the busie Jewes to leaue of, and putteth them from the barre. Wherein some thinges are to be allowed, and other some to be reprovied. It is to be commended that he rashely condemneth not that religion that he knew not. For in so doing, he is of more equitie and modestie, then many magistrates in our dayes, who being ignoraunt in all kinde of religion, doe yet take vpon them onely to haue skill in the same. Which is one of the greatest causes of the calamitie, that troubleth the whole worlde in these dayes. But by no meanes is it commendable, that Gallio altogether neglecteth religion, and thinketh the hearing thereof appertayneth not vnto him. For God will haue the king still to be reading of the lawe, and hath appointed magistrates to be senere and diligent reuengers of true religion. See Deut. 17 and 18. And we haue examples of most godly kings, which in the scripture are for this cause chiefly cominended, that they banished superstition and restored true religion. Therefore intollerable is the erroze of them now a dayes which go about to perswade the magistrate, that they should not meddle with any mannes religion, but to let euery body serue God, as seemeth him good. But in dede, these men haue a farre other fetch. For they hope it will come to passe, that Princes shall followe the example of Gallio, and

shall

shall giue them leaue to plant what religion they please in the Church. And as great is the errour of some princes and magistrates, who being desirous to be counted and called christians, yet affirme that religion pertayneth not to their iurisdiction, but commit the same vnto couetous Monkes, and to vnlearned and proude Prelates, leauing Christs shepe to the ordering and pleasure of most foolish men, yea vnto Wolves to be deuoured. And thus princes thinke they are well excused, which hope of theirs shall greatly deceyue them: for God shall one day require his people which he committed to their charge at their handes, and by this argument, they shall be proued to be vntrusty seruauntes, because they sayde religion appertayned not to their charge, which of all other things was chiefly commended vnto them.

Nowe let vs see the ende of this Tragedie, where the veritie of Gods promise, most manifestly appeareth. For after the Grekes perceyued that Gallio dyd not much regarde the matter, they take Sosthenes the Ruler of the Synagoge, and shamefully beate hym. This it was lyke they did, by the setting on of the Jewes. For Sosthenes was a faythfull companyon of Paule, whose helpe in setting forth the gospell, it manifestly appeareth Paule vsed, by the superscription of hys fyrst Epistle to the Corinthians. But thys seemeth a wonderfull thing, that when the matter came to hande stryppes, Paule agaynst whom all the Jewes made thys insurrection goeth away unhurt and vntouched, yea is not compelled to depart the Citie. For we shall heare how he taried there a good space after. But shall we say the cause was that they spared Paule? were they perswaded by his eloquence and defence, to keepe their handes from hym. The Liefetenaunt woulde not boushase to heare him, was it the authoritie of the Liefetenaunt that defended hym? why he being a Gentyle, and a manifest vngodly person, had no regarde vnto the Jewes matters. Had he anye other aduocate or defender? But what other coulde be founde of such authoritie, to withstande such furious men: especially the Ruler being slacke in his duety doing, who onely had authoritie in that Citie to commaunde. It remaineth therefore that we confesse, howe Paule was preserved by the secreete assistance of God alone, that the promise should be fulfilled, that sayde no man should be able to doe him harme. Thus we reade howe the Patriarches were sometime preserved amonge the Chanaanites, God thundering in their eares and hartes. Touch not mine annoynd. &c. So Christ with one worde deliuereth his Disciples, although Peter had prouoked the raging enemy, with drawne sword, & wounding the Byshops seruaunt. By these thyngs we may comfort our selues, seing we see the power of God, to be so great, in performing his promise and defending hys people, that euen then they escape safe awaye, when they seeme to be in the myddest of their enymies furie.

But we must retorne againe vnto Gallio, in whome the holyghost hath set vs out a president of an vngodly Magistrate and boorde of religion. For he not long agoe flatly denied, that religion belonged to his iurisdiction. He also confessed, that it was his dutie to defende the harmelesse from iniurie, and to punish the wickednesse. But yet he suffreth Sosthenes to be mistreated in his sight, and so perfourmeth not that which erewhile he confessed was his dutie. Many such there are in these dayes, who for modesties

The ende of
this Trage-
dy is pro-
perous.

Psal. 105.

Gallio is a
president of
an vngodly
Officer.

sake, leauing of the hearing of matters in religion, doe streyghtway betoaze themselves, to be men, farthest of from all religion and iustice, in that they defend not the seruants of God from ciuill iniuries, yea, notozious wrongs done vnto them. And there is no cause why we shoulde thinke them maintainers of iustice, which haue cast from them the care of religion. For how can it be that he can be faythfull and trustie to see men haue their right, that is vntrustie to Godwarde, and thinketh it not his dutie to maintayne Gods honoz and gloze? Therefore we may nowe a dayes see many Galliones, the more is the pitie, and there is no greater cause of publyke iniustice, than for that a number of Princes for the most part haue no feeling of religion. But howe much more grienously maye we saye they sinne, who glorying in the name of Christian men, suffer the faythfull seruants of Christ, to be misused before their face, and whome they ought to defende by their authoritie, and with the sworde, for mennes sakes consent to let their enemies haue them, to condemne at their pleasure: which is a thing in these dayes so much bled, that it needeth no examples to declare it.

What maner
of state those
people are in
that lured
sometime in
freedome, but
nowe in bond-
age.

Last of all is to be considered, what a miserable state they are in, which haue lost their libertie, and are enforced to serue straungers. For such were the Jewes, who from Pompeius Magnus time, as we knowe were in subiection to the Romaines, and scattered abroade ouer all their iurisdiction. Such also were the Corinthians, who as hystories make mention were banquished and brought vnder the Romaines obeyssaunce by L. Mūnius their generall. And no doubt but both these Nations were punished by the iust iudgement of God, for their sinnes and offences. But what misery fell they into, by this one fact of theirs? The Jewes were scattered throughout the worlde and hated of all men. They heare their religion most shamefully despised by those, whome they are enforced to take for their Lordes. The Corinthians, although in religion they agreed with the Romaines, yet had they such a President, as regarded not publike iniuries, but winked at most heynous wickednesse. Let them be mindefull hereof, to whome God hath giuen libertie and freedome. Let them vse it to the gloze of God, least they feele the lyke iudgement of God, and become examples for other. Yea, let them in that libertie of mynde and body that God hath giuen them, rather serue and please him, that they may liue with him in heauen through Iesus Christ the onely giuer of true libertie: to whom be blessing, honoz, power, and gloze, for euer. Amen.

The.Cxxij.Homely.

P A V L E after this taried there yet a good whyle, & then tooke his leaue of the brethren, and sayled thence into Syria, Priscilla and Aquila accompanying him. And he shored his heade in Cenchrea, for he had a vowe. And hee came to Ephesus and left them there: but he himselfe entred into the Synagoge, and reasoned with the Iewes. When they desired him to tary a longer time with them, he consented not, but bade them farewell, saying: I must needs at this feast that commeth, bee in Ierusalem, but I will returne againe vnto you, if God will. And he departed from Ephesus, and when he was come vnto Caesarea, and ascended vp and saluted the congregation, he departed vnto

Antioch.

Antioch, and when he had taried there a while, he departed, and went ouer all the countrie of Gallacia and Phrygia by order, strengthening all the disciples.



S Paule liued no where in greater teare and trembling, than at Corinth: so founde he God no where more readye to ayde and assist him than there. For fyrst he promised him his helpe and fauor by a vision. Next, being apprehended by the Jewes, and brought before the Lieue-tenant, he deliuered him in wonderfull wise, although the matter came to strokes, and Sosthenes was very euill intreated. The blyc of all these things (as we erewhile sayde) serueth for the comfort of the godly. For God is able to deliuer them also in like sort, and we ought not to doubt of his good will, forasmuch as it is euident, he is true of his worde, therfore he cannot breake nor fayle of his promise. But bicause we haue hereof sayd ynough in the last sermon, following the order of the storie, let vs see what was done after the styres rased against Paule at Corinth.

The fyrst thing here in this place declared, is howe Paule taried at Corinth many dayes after these feares of perill and daunger. The next, when he had taken his leaue of the late erected Church, how he toke his iourney with Aquilas and Priscilla into Syria, and vnto Ierusalem, yet hauing fyrst shauen his heade at Cenchrea, by reason of a bowe he had made. Here Pauls constancie and manlynnesse is singulerly to be commended, which boldly ouercommeth all dreade and feare, and remayneth at Corinth, among his cruell enemies, hauing no hope eyther in Magistrate, or other kynde of men, verily, for the rude and weake Disciples sake, which he sawe had neede of comfortyng, lest their beliefe being as yet but tender and greene, shoulde dye (as they say) in the blade and fyrst sprouting. Yea, he doth the part of a good shephearde, which Christ sayeth flieth not when he seeth the wolfe comming, but ventureth his life for the safegarde of his shepe. There maye also a generall doctrine be taken hereof, howe they that haue once assayed the ayde and helpe of God, ought to holde on in their vocation, the more boldly and constantly, & not (as some preposterous wisemen blyc) thinke they are therefore set at libertie, bicause they should thenceforth take no more paynes and traueyle, as though they had discharged all their dutie. Also Aquila and Priscilla those godly couple, are as much to be marked and considered, who hauing bene once or thwice banished before, doe yet once againe chaunge their dwelling, and accompanye Paule both by sea and by land. And howe ioperdous a thing this was (to say nothing of their expences and traueyle) may be gathered by this one thing, for that the whole nation of the Jewes seemed to haue conspyred moste obstinately together to destroye Paule. Verily Paule for this their companye, and for other causes prayseth them, as those that had hazarded their liues for hys sake. In which doing, as they at that time deserued great thankes of all congregations, so they gate themselves an immortall glozy of name, which remayneth vnto this day, and shall for euer. See Rom. 16. By their examples we ought also to be prouoked, to be bolde in Christes glozye, for the Gospell, and the Ministers thereof, bicause there are extaunt generall promises, which promise them a sure rewarde, which giue but a cup of colde water to any one for Christes sake. The same reason ought to cause vs to consider all

Paule after
his daungers
abeyeth at
Corinth.

Iohn. 10.

The trust
and friend-
ship of Aquila
and Priscilla
towards
Paule.

Gene. 14.

Gene. 18.

Pauls bowe.

Luke. 9.

1. Cor. 11.

1. Cor. 9.

all other needye brethzen also, whome the Lorde hath so commended vnto vs, that he will at the daye of iudgement take it as done to himselfe, that hath bene bestowed on them. And the opinion of those menne that thinke common weales are ouercharged with the multitude of banished persons, is most detestable and vngodly, whereas such commonlye procure the blessing of God vnto those places that they be in. Lot onely restored the Sodomites, being taken and overcome to their libertie agayne. And if that Citie had had but fenne inhabitants like vnto Lot, they had also bene deliuered out of that horrible destruction of fyre from heauen, for their sakes. I might rehearse diuers other like examples, but that the time and Text requyrez vs to speake of other things.

This is a straunge thing, and not hearde of in the booke of the newe Testament, that Paule for a bowes sake that he had made, shaueth hys heade. This place can be vnderstanded none otherwise than of the bowe of the Nazareans, vnlesse we will say Paule was giuen to mannes traditions, who in other places affirmeth and standeth in it, that the faythfull ought not be burthened with the ceremonies of Gods lawe. As touching the Nazarites, Moses writeth at large in the booke of Numbers, cap. 6. By the which place it easily appeareth, that euery man was at libertie to vse what trade of lyfe he would, after the time or date of his bowe was expyred and runne out. For where we read that Samson and Samuel (which from their mothers wombe were put apart for great and weichty assayes) obserued the lawes of the Nazarites all their life long, we must make no general rule or lawe thereof. They as hauing inspiration and feeling of great religion in their mindes, bound themselves of their owne accorde, to the obseruation of this bowe, to the intent that they woulde the more feruently apply Gods calling and seruite. Wherefore they altogether abstained from wine, bicause drunkennesse and religion can by no meanes stande together. And with wine they auoided also other pleasures, which otherwise were lawfull. Furthermore, they came at no burials, no not of their parentes and kinsfolke, bicause no affection ought to pull away men truly addicted vnto God, from him, for Christ also sayth, that the care of the dead pertayneth rather to them who had rather to dye in the worlde, than with him to aspire to the societie of heauenly life. Moreover, the Nazareans all the time of their bowe, lette their heare growe, thereby testifying that they were not at their owne ap-
pointment, but bounde by a peculiar bow. For Paule himselfe teacheth vs, that the couering of the heade was a token of subiection, where he commaundeth men to pray bareheaded, but women with their heades couered, bicause the man is free, but the woman vnder the mans power, whome she ought to take for hir heade. For the which cause, when the time of the bowe was out, the Nazareans were shauen in solemne wise, to thend they might know they were restored to their former libertie agayne. It may seme that Paule toke this bowe vpon him, bicause of the Jewes, which thought him to be a prophane and wicked contemner of the lawe, and therefore thought by this meane the sweter to winne them to hearken to the Gospell. For he seemeth to confesse a like thing, where he writeth he became a Jewe vnto the Jewes, and to those that were vnder the lawe, as one himselfe vnder the lawe. Otherwise he was not ignozant of Christian libertie, which he e-
uerywhere writeth ought not to be broken for anye ceremonies sake. See

Colof. 2. Galat. 4. Therfore they doe most foolishly which abuse the example of Paule, to the maintenance of Monkish bowes. For this bowe was instituted in the lawe of God, which although in the death of Christ it is abolished with the ceremonies thereof, yet for the auncient dignitie thereof, and for the weake's sake, it was not sodeinly to be made awaye and buried, but by little and little. But it is euident that Monkes bowes are founded vpon the traditions of men, which ought to be of no authoritie in religion. Againe the Nazareans bowed vnto God, where the molte part of Monkish bowes are made vnto Creatures. Agayne the bowes of the Nazareans altered not the trade of lyfe, neyther was the vnitie of the Church therby deuided. But Monkish bowes, as they take away all former trades of life, so they bring into the Church many diuers sectes. The Nazareans bowed such things as man was able to performe. Monkes bowe chastity, which the whole Scripture sayth, is not giuen to euery man. The Nazareans were grieuous or chargeable to none, by reason of their bowe. But Monkes whyle they bowe wilfull pouertie, will be fedde like ydle paunchbellies of other mennes labors. The Nazareans bowe forbade them not obedience to Magistrates, Parentes, and all other estates, to whome we be bounde by nature. Monkes bowes breake all obedience, and bind them onely to their Abbots, who owe obedience both to Parentes and Rulers. furthermore, the Nazareans had no affiance in their owne merites. For they both confessed themselves to be sinners, when their bowe was ended, and that God was the authoz of all goodnesse. But Monkish bowes molte of all other maintayne an affiance in mans righteousnesse and deseruings. Wherefore if there were no other cause, this one were sufficient to condemne them, and put them away.

But to let passe this pumpe and sinke of superstition, returne we vnto Paule, which traueyling out of Achaia into Asia the lesser, came to Ephesus, where we haue to consider foure thinges in order. first he goeth into the Synagoge and disputeth with the Jewes. Agayne here appeareth the loue he bare to his countriemen, whome for manye causes (as we haue otherwheres declared) he coulde not hate, although he had once or twyse before shaken the dust of agaynst them. This example of Paule teacheth vs, that the wrath and iudgement of God shoulde so be set out vnto the wicked, that if they conuert, they may yet knowe there is hope left that God will be favourable vnto them, and pardon them. For it is God that sayth: I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he conuert and lyue. Wherefore we must vse all the diligence that we can, to bring and winne people vnto the Lord. Secondly, the example of the Ephesians teacheth vs, that the labor of the Saintes is not in vayne. For where they are desirous to haue Paule remaine longer among them, it appeareth euidently, they had much profyted by him. For it cannot be that they can delyght in the Ministers companye, that haue not as yet tasted the fruite of the doctrine of the gospell. Neyerther can they be iudged for louers of the Gospell, that vse to hate the Ministers thereof, and litle to regarde their labors, and disdainefully to auoyde their companyes. Let vs agayne consider howe Paule refuseth to accomplishe a godly request: for he sayth: I must needs at this feast that commerth be at Ierusalem. I pray you what neede urged Paule so to be? Shall we say it was for deuotion sake of the feast? No. For he knewe well that holyc dayes were

Paule teacheth the Jewes at Ephesus.

Ezech. 18.

2 Cor

3

abrogated

abrogated among other ceremonies, and there was no cause urged him for the weake brethrens sake to go by to Jerusalem, because there were many Jewes in euery Citie, drowned in Jewishe superstitions, which notwithstanding went not thither. Wherefore, as in other places we haue reade howe Paule was guided by the holy ghost in all his doinges: so it is lyke he was secretly moued by the same spirite to take this voyage now in hande, although the cause be not expessed nor yet declared what he did there, more than saluted the congregation and brethren. Surely Pauls traueyle coulde not be in vayne in such a Citie, whereunto agaynst the feast, repayred such a great multitude both of Jewes and Gentyles, from among all nations. For so euen at one time together, might the doctrine of the Gospell be scattered among many Nations. It is to be marueyled why Paule is pulled so soone from them, which seemed to be so ready to receyue profite by the gospell, and it may seeme an vn courteous and an vnloving part to leaue them, if we should herin leane vnto reason. But Gods doings are to him knowne and certaine. And the chiefe vse of such examples, is for vs to learne to submit our willes and desires, seme they neuer so holy and good, vnto the pleasure of God. Fourthly, let vs see howe Paule departed from Ephesus. He biddeth them farewell, which is a token of thankfulness and friendly good will. For their discourtesie is very vn honest that depart from their hoste, where they haue receyued benefytes, without taking of leaue. Moreover he leaueth Aquilas with them, that they should not seme altogether destitute. Furthermore, he promisseth to returne to them againe, by the leaue of God. Whereby it manifestly appeareth, that he bare them no euill will, but was compelled and strayned for weighty considerations to leaue them. Here we haue to imitate Pauls religiousnesse, which in a most godly cause presumeth nothing of his owne heade, but vnderstanding that all endeuors and deuises, depend vpon Gods prouidence, referreth all things vnto his pleasure. This sentence of Salomon is common, manne purposeth, but God disposeth. What rashnesse then is this of men, to attribute so much to themselves in prophane matters so to appoynt their doinges as though they woulde prescribe lawes vnto God. See Iacob 4. Luc. 12. in 30. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

Prouer. 16.

Pauls labors
and Diligence

Paule being now departed from Ephesus, cometh to Caesarea in Iury, and from thence to Jerusalem; when he had there greeted the congregation, and dispatched the matters about the which he went, he came to Antioche, the publike sanctuary (as we sayde before) of all godly persons. From thence he passed through the Galathians and Phrygians confirming the brethren, euerywhere in the fayth, for that he was not ignorant of the craftes and enterprises of Satan, which lyeth still in wayte for the godly. Luke in fewe wordes comprehendeth the great paynes, care, and marueylous diligence that Paule vsed in the gouerning of Christ his Church. But if a man would compare the Bishops of our dayes with him, which bragge of Paule and Peters name (good Lorde) howe little shall a man fynde in them, expressing but one sparkle of Pauls breast. In the meane season, let vs acknowledge the truth of God, which prouideth for his Church; such faythfull and chosen instruments, and let vs beseech him, to sende out faithfull labourers into hys harvest, which may enlarge the boundes of his Church, that our Lorde and sauiour Jesus Christ may haue a kingdome in all nations: to whome be prayse, honor, power and glory for euer. Amen.

The

The.Cxxiiij. Homelie.

AND a certaine Iewe named Apollos, borne at Alexandria, came to Ephesus, an eloquent man and myghtie in the scriptures. The same was enfourmed in the way of the Lorde, and spake feruently in the spirite, & taught dyligently the things of the Lorde, and knewe but the baptisme of Iohn onely. And the same beganne to speake boldly in the Synagoge, whome when Priscilla and Aquila had hearde, they tooke him vnto them, and expounded vnto hym the way of God more perfytely. And when he was disposed to go into Achaia, the brethren wrote exhorting the Disciples to receyue him. Which when he was come helped them much, which had beleued thorowe grace, for he ouercame the Iewes myghtilye, and that openly, shewing by the Scriptures that Iesus was Christ.



Vnto the discourse of the thinges done by the Apostle Paule at Corinth and Ephesus, Luke annexeth in order, the hystorie of Apollos the Iewe, borne at Alexandria. For fyrst it maketh for the more perfyte declaration of the thinges done among the Corinthians, bicause Apollos not long after this, went to Corinth, and watered the Church there that Paule had prosperouslye planted, and lyke a dyligent husbandman, brought it to more rypnesse of fruite, as the Apostle confesseth in the fyrst to the Corinthians the thirde Chapter. Here appeareth likewise the great goodnesse of God in prouyding for his Church. For we heard in the Sermon going before, howe Paule by secrete instinct of the holye ghost, was taken from the Ephesians, which being inflamed with the loue of the gospell, desyred longer to haue kept him with them. Therefore least any man might thinke, that God neglected those that were so desyrous of saluation, & so myght take occasion to thinke yll of God, he substituteth Apollos in his place, to supply Paules absence, by his diligence and endeuour. For God neglecteth none that are desyrous of the truth, who calleth all men vnto him euery where, and allureth them with spreade open armes. Therefore this hystorie maketh not a little for the comfort of the Church, conteyning also an example of a faythfull and an absolute minister, with many other things, belonging to our instruction, wherefore it shall be profytable to examine all the partes thereof.

Luke begynneth very commodiously with the description of the person, saying fyrst he was a Iewe, where partly is declared the great mercie of God, which out of a most enuious nation, falling and running headlong into destruction, chooseth out euery day newe and freshe worshippers of hys sonne, and Ministers, and partly the Iewes malice is proued incurable, which could be overcome neyther with the great dyligence of the Apostles, nor yet with daylie & domesticall examples. Next he declareth how he was borne at Alexandria, where hystories saye, and thys present place proueth, was a most famous Church and schoole erected, euen in the time of the Apostles. For from thence, cometh thys Apollos furnished with so many dyuers giftes, whose labour and traueyle afterwarde appeared so great, in

What manner
of person, and
of what qua-
lities Apol-
los was.

The bap-
tisme of Iohn.

The giftes
wherewith
Apollo was
endued.

1. Cor. 12.

the buylding bp of the congregation. Luke in verry fewe wordes attributeth to him singuler qualities, saying he is eloquent, that is to saye, had a gift aptly and in due maner to speake or reason of any matter: also power or might in the scriptures, that is a conuenable dexteritie in handling or intreating of them, as one that had not learned them onely for ostentation sake. Moreover, he declareth he was brought bp in the way of the Lorde, thereby attributing vnto him the knowledge of Christ: yet declaring he wanted some poyntes thereof, where he sayth, he knewe but the baptisme of Iohn onely. So calleth he the principles of christian religion, comprehending vnder this worde baptisme, all the doctrine of Iohn, and al that businessse whereof he was Minister. In the which sence Christ also demaunded the Scribes of Iohns baptisme. Math. 21. Yet this place must not so be vnderstanded, as though Iohn had had no knowledge of Christ, or had taught his Disciples any doctrine contrarie to Christ. For Iohns doctrine and Christes was all one. For as Christ commaundeth the Apostles to preach repentaunce and forgiveness of sinnes in his name: so reade we that Iohn moued his hearers vnto repentaunce, and shewed them that the grace of God and saluation was to be had in Christ onely. For the summe of his doctrine was: Repent you, for the kingdome of God is at hande. Beholde the Lambe of God which taketh away the sinnes of the worlde. The father loueth the sonne, and hath giuen all things into his hande, that all that beleeue in the sonne, may haue lyfe euerlasting. See Luke. 3. Iohn. 1. and thirde chapters. And because Iohn was in the myddle betwixt the Prophets and Christ, and was therefore but the forerunner of the sauyour that was promised, who should prepare and make ready the people to receyue Christ, it suffised him to declare but a short and brieue summe of our saluation and knowledge of Christ, that all men might vnderstande howe forgiveness of sinnes, and life euerlasting, was to be had but in him alone. In the meane season it is manifest, that he no where taught the secret misteries of Christes death, resurrection and ascension, or the whole order of our redemption, in expresse wordes. For the perfyte vnderstanding hereof was reserued for an other tyme, yea we reade that the very Apostles were not so skilfull in these thinges, although that Christ had oftentimes reasoned hereof, vntill after his ascension, they were illuminated by the holy ghost, that was sent them, as Christ had promised them. Therefore, although Apollos was brought bp in the waye of the Lorde, and knewe that Christ was the sauiour of the worlde, yet was he ignoraunt in manye thinges, which concerned the maner of our redemption, whereof he was more at large to be enfourmed, as shall followe a little hereafter. In the meane tyme, we haue two thyngs to consider in the description of this person. First is the order and linking togyther of gyftes, wherewith God thought good to adourne Apollo. Amongst these thinges eloquence occupieth the fyrst rowme, which is a thing necessary for all persons, as well in the ministerie as in the common weale, as daylie experience declareth. But whether this gifte come vnto man by nature, or be gotten by arte, labour, studie, and traueyle, we knowe it hath bene a thing, long agoe argued on, amongst the fyne witted Orators and Philosophers. But we following the Apostles saying, account the gift of utteraunce amonge the giftes of the holpe Ghost. By whose inspiration we say that Apollos had this gift. Secondly,

rily, Luke sayth, that he was mightie in the Scriptures, and endued with
 an effectuall dexteritie of handling them. Thus he maketh a difference
 betwene this mans godly eloquence, and prophane. For vlesse the mat-
 ter entreated of, be taken out of the holy scriptures, or from the mouth of
 God, eloquence is to no purpose, as the which is occupied rather about try-
 fls and in ostentation, then about things needefull to be knowne and done.
 And verily the Orators of the gentiles are not to be called eloquent, which
 in dede disputed and debated things synely and trimly, but such as per-
 ceined nothing to the godly and christian leading of our lyfe, what else there-
 fore shall we saye they did, but heaue out vaine wordes, pulling Hercules
 buskinnes as they say, vpon a chilles legges. Certaine men marueyle at
 the force of their spech, but yet vaine men, and not much unlike vnto them.
 Howe much better did that Lacedemonian aunswere a Sophister that pro-
 mised to tell a long and extemporate tale of any matter: I (sayth he) would
 not commend that shoemaker that would pull a wide shoe vpon a little
 foote. Therefore vnto this godly and profytable studie of Scripture, Apollo
 ioyne the knowledg of eloquence. But bicause diuers, euen in scripture
 seeke ostentation and vain glory (as Christ vpbraided the Jewish Scribes)
 therfore in the third place Apollo is sayd to haue bene inuourmed in the way
 of the Lorde, that is, to haue the knowledg of Christ. Luke bleth this word
 (way) to declare that he was not ydle in this knowledg, but following the
 rule of Christ, laboured to order his whole conuersation of life thereafter.
 This is the ende of all gistes. For where our saluation is conteyned in
 Christ onely, vaine and vnprofytable is the ostentation of all other things,
 except men ioine the knowledg of him with their other studies. And Christ
 himselfe expressely teacheth vs, that this shoulde be our marke and ende,
 in searching the Scriptures. Which was the cause that Paule iudged all
 those things which the worlde greatly esteemeth, as dunge, so he might at-
 tayne to the knowledg of Christ. He sayth also that Christ is made of God,
 our wisdom, and he desireth to knowe nothing but Iesus Christ, and him
 crucified. Woulde God they would consider these things, which in schooles
 and vniuersities bewitch yong men with vaine Philosophie, and banishe
 from thence the knowledg of Christ, as a thing belonging only to begger-
 ly Diuines, as they call them. The seconde thing to be learned in Apollo, is
 that such an excellent man wanteth yet some thinges, which to know is ne-
 cessary for all men. Wherevpon we gather, that God giueth not all things
 vnto all men, and that there are increasements and certaine degrees of en-
 crease in gyftes, considering no manne in the worlde hath full and perfyte
 knowledg of the mysteries of the kingdome of God, which Paule sayth we
 shall haue in the worlde to come, when we are taken into heauen, and shall
 see God face to face as he is. Whereof yet no manne must gather, that all
 things sayde of religion in this worlde, are vncertaine. For where God by
 his worde in the Scripture reuealeth to vs the knowledg hereof, it can-
 not be vncertaine that is declared in the worde. Yet bicause the perfyte
 knowledg of God is reserued for vs in heauen, we may euery day as long
 as we liue, profyte and encrease therein. We must therfore neuer rest here,
 but still studie for more knowledg of God, that we maye attayne euen in
 this worlde, to some taste of this perfection, as farre as we are able. Here-
 by are those ydle Dranes reproued, which thinke all studie that is giuen

Iohn. 5.

Phil. 3.

1. Cor. 2.

1. Cor. 13.

unto Scripture, is vaine and vnprofytable, thereby declaring that they neuer once tasted the same. For such is the pleasantnesse of Scripture, that it is a baite as it were, for men alwayes to bite at. Those proude men also that haue so much affiance in their knowledge, that they thinke there is no more for them to learne, and therefore despyse all study of scripture, are here confuted, which are so farre from that perfection, that they perswade themselves to haue that they yet knowe not themselves very well.

Howe Apollos
vsed his
gifts.

Furthermore, to retorne vnto Luke, he ioyning to the description of his person, the thinges that he did, declareth howe Apollos vsed these giftes that God gaue him. He spake feruently in the spirite, and taught diligently the thinges of the Lorde. Agayne, hee beganne to speake boldly in the Synagoge. Therefore he vsed his giftes to the setting forth of the glorie of the Lorde, teaching vs by his example, that then Gods giftes are lawfully vsed, when Gods name which gaue them vs is by them celebrated. This thankfulness we owe euen by the lawe of nature which is grafted in all creatures. Therefore they greatly offende which ydly bury the giftes that God hath giuen them, whereof Christ intreateth vnder the Parable of a naughty seruant, Math. 25. Yet much more grievously doe they offende, which abuse his giftes at their pleasure, to the reproche of his holye name, as now a dayes commonly the giftes both of the minde and bodye are abused. But they shall one day giue a streight account vnto God, that thus fylthily defyle and pollute themselves. Also this example declareth what trade of teaching shoulde be vsed in the Church. First, zeale and feruencie of spirite is needefull, that all men maye see their saying commeth from the heart. For onlesse this spirite be present, the teaching shall serue but to ostentation. Thus that ardent and continuall traueyle in teaching, and that feruent spirite in reforming the Temple, abundantly declared the zeale that Christ was enflamed with. And those that are milke warme teachers shall neuer be allowed, bicause Christ will haue euen priuate men in matters of religion to be hote. See Apocalyps. 3. Next, it is needefull to vse diligence both bicause of our dull witte, which perceiueth not heavenly thinges, and also bicause of the corruption of our nature, which alwayes bseth to resist Gods commaundement. Beside, the malice of Satan our common enimie whose craftes it behoueth the faythfull Ministers of God, day and night diligently to withstande. Therefore Paule commaundeth Timothie, whom he knew was brought bp of a childe, in the studie of Scripture, to giue hærde to his reading. Likewise hereafter he exhorteth the Pastors of Ephesus to wakefulness and diligence, by most weighty arguments. Thirdly, it behoueth that Ministers shoulde be bolde to speake, that they dissemble not eyther for fauor or feare. But herof we haue spoken before, where Paule was commaunded to speake, and not to hold his peace. And the thinges enioyned the Ministers of the word, it is necessary al men that beare office shoulde likewise performe, as y scriptures euerywhere declare. Yea, let all men priuately apply these thinges to themselves, if they meane to be allowed of God in their vocation. For where God requyrez vs to serue him, with all our harts, we that haue giuen our selues wholye vnto him, must not choise but paynefully, plainly, and feruently occupie our selues in these affayres, as meete is.

The trade
howe to teach
in the church.

1. Tim 4.

Apollos profyts
in the

Now Luke describeth howe Apollos profyted in the knowledge of Christ and saluation, while he goeth about to set forth his glory, and to further the saluation

saluation of others. For he sayth: when Aquila and Priscilla had hearde him, they tooke him vnto them, and expounded the waye of God vnto him more perfectly. And here aboue all thinges appeareth the truth of that promise of Christ, To euery one that hath (sayth he) shall be giuen, and he shall abound. They are sayde to haue, which acknowledge the giftes giuen vnto them, and which vse them diligently to the glozy of God, that when the Lorde requyrez an account of them, he may receyue it with blaunce and encrease. This bicause Apollos did perfozme with all diligence and industrie, as we sayde erewhyle, therefore God sayleth not of his promise, but streightway stirreth by saythfull Ministers which enforme him moze fully and perfectly in his will. This ought to serue for the instruction of all men, that they may vnderstande howe all the graces of God, are no waye moze happily increased, than by faithfull studie. Thus they that vse their wisdom to the setting forth of Gods glozy, doe feele euery day how God encrease the same. The like reason is to be made of learning, honours, riches, and of all other things, whereof we lacke not examples to proue the same. Agayne, there is no greater cause why the giftes of God are quenched in vs, than when we giue our selues rather to sloth and ydlenesse, than to the setting forth of Gods glozy. Here for manye considerations both Aquila and Priscilla, and Apollos are to be marked. For vnder those fewe wordes the Euaungelist comprehendeth great godlynesse and vertues. It is a great argument of godlinesse, that they giue eare to Apollos while he teacheth, wheras yet they had so great intelligence in the mysteries of Christ, that they were able to teach both him and others. This is the true marke of the children of God, whose propertie Christ sayth, is to heare his worde both willingly and often. They are reprovved by this example, which thinke they haue profyted so much in the knowledge of saluation, that they haue neede of no farther instruction, and therefore will neyther reade the Scriptures at home, nor come at the Church to heare Sermons. Thus whyle they thinke they haue profyted to much, they openly declare they are yet ignorant, what the chiefe cognizance of the children of God is. For they bicause they knowe the kingdome of God consisteth not in bare knowledge, but rather that God requyrez we shoulde order our life according to the rule of his worde, they cannot be satisfied with hearing, bicause they feele that they want much euen in the chiefest poynt. Moreover, this holy couple of married folke, declare a feruent desire to the glozy of God, in taking such an one to instruct, as they sawe was able greatly to profyte the Church of Christ. Agayne, it is an argument of true loue, and cleare of all enuie, that they priuately instruct him, and enuie him not that glozy that he had hyther to gotten, by his faithfull traueyle, but rather helpe him, that both he may be the moze perfectly instructed, and the moze people wonne by his meane. If a manne woulde compare this with the doings in our dayes, good Lorde, howe fewe or rather no tokens of so Christian a minde shall we fynde in them, which will seme godlye, and restozers of the light of the Gospell? For as soone as they perceyue the authoritie of any man to increase, by and by the gyddinesse of ambition maketh them to enuie him, and they seeke all meanes possible, if any occasion serue, to bzing him in enuie and contempt, as though they coulde not prouide for their owne honour, but with the infamy of others. But howe shall they be belæued, that are so desirous of the honoz of the worlde.

knowledge of
Christ.

Math. 25.

The prayse
of Aquilas,
and Priscilla.

Iohn. 8.

4 mms. 11. 29
Ihon - 3. 29. 30

Iohn. 5.

The modestie
of Apollos.

1. Cor. 14.

Apollos goeth
to Corinth.

1. Tim. 5.

worlde. Surely this is the spirite of Cain, who we reade rose against his brother for no other cause, but for that he perceyued his brother was better than he, and more in fauor with God than he. Nowe as in religion and in the ministry of the Church, it behoueth to auoyde this mischiefe, so in priuate doings it becommeth diligently to auoyde all occasions of enuye and hatred, if we will be called the true children of God. But as in Aquila and Priscilla these vertues appeare, so in Apollo maye be perceyued a rare and singuler modestie and tractabilitie. For he that excelled in eloquence, and in all kinde of learning, is contented to be taught of a man of handycraft, and of a woman, vnknowne to him before this time, and straungers. For true is that saying of Paule, that the spirites of the Prophetes are subdued vnto the Prophetes. Nowe compare with this Apollo, the arrogauce of them which cannot abyde to be admonished or rebuked of their Coministers, whereof there is to great a number in these dayes. But as in times past, the insolencie of such did much hurt vnto the Church, so this is the chiefe cause in these dayes, that there is such contention euerywhere, because there are in all places, which take vpon them such rule in the Church, that they esteeme their brethren and Coministers, but as dogges or hogs.

Besides these, is there yet an other argument, whereby Appollos declareth his feruent desyre to set forth the kingdome of God. For after he perceyued he was sufficiently instructed in the knowledg of Christ, he appointed to go into Achaia, to Corinth, because he perceyued that Church had much neede of his helpe. For as valyant souldiours of their owne accord, chosse them such places, as where they see is most labour and daunger: so they which will traueyle in the warfare of the Church with their commendation and the profite of the same Church, must diligently obserue where their help is most requisite, and thither haste themselves diligently, that by their negligence the kingdome of God suffer no detriment. Here also is the fayth and diligence of the brethren of Ephesus to be obserued, which would not let the faythfull Minister of Christ, and one that had deserved so well of their congregation, to depart without a publike testimonie of his vertuous behauiour: yea they so commend him vnto the Corinthians, that they also desyre them to giue him the rowme of a teacher in their Church. For as it is needefull that a Minister of the worde haue the commendation of persons abroad, that he fall not into the snare of the slanderer: so they may not be denyed the commendation of their vertue, which haue declared their fayth by manifest arguments vnto the Church. For they that promote such as these are to the ministerie, deserue no small prayse in the kingdome of God. Againe they are worthily accounted wicked, both against Christ and the church, which of blinde affection, keepe backe such as are worthy from the ministerie, yet we must beware (as Paule sayth) that we admyt not euerie one rashely therevnto, least we be partakers of other mennes sinnes. And that we say of the Ministers of the church, is to be obserued of all other in any maner of office or vocation, that is to say, that the worthy be set forward, and the vnworthy repulsd and kept backe, as much as in vs lyeth, least whyle we commende naughtie packes, we endamage and in daunger the whole common weale. And as concerning Apollos, he endeouored himselfe to aunswere the testimony and commendation of the brethren, least they might seme to haue thrust an vnnate Minister into an other peoples

peoples Church. For he much profyted the brethren at Corinth, which be-
 leaued through the grace of God. Now whether a man refetre this worde
 grace to Apollos, or to the Corinthians, it commeth all to one sense. For he
 teacheth thereby that nothing is to be attributed to mannes industrie, but
 howe God is to be taken for the authoz of all goodnesse, which did vouch-
 safe to giue such an increase: whereof Paule disputeth at large in the fyrst
 Epistle to the Corinthians, the thirde chapter. And surely if the Corinthi-
 ans had well considered this one thing, they had neuer giuen place to those,
 which afterwarde disturbed the Church with the factious names of Pauls
 disciples, Peters and Apollos. But Luke declareth also the meane and waye
 howe Apollos thus profyted the brethren, namely by open confuting of the
 Jewes, and by prouing out of the scriptures, that Iesus was Christ, that
 is to say, that sauour of the worlde, that was promised, which place tea-
 cheth vs many things needfull to be obserued. For fyrst we learne, that not
 onely the Church hath neede to be instructed, but also that the aduersaries
 should be confuted. For they can not much profyte the church, which doe
 not with all their endeuour go about to roote vp false doctrine, euen as that
 tyllage can not be fruitfull, which suffreth thornes and cockle to growe a-
 mong it. For this cause Ieremie is commaunded fyrst to worde and pull vp,
 and then after that to builde & plant. And Paule appointeth such an one to be
 Byshop, as is able to conuince the gainesayers and aduersaries. And that
 we say of false teachers, which must needes be confuted, the same is also
 to be vnderstanded of open and notozious naughtie packes, which gyue
 occasion of offence vnto the weaker sort. For the faythfull Minister must
 set on them also with the sworde of the spirite, or else leaue his Church to
 be torne of the Woolues. Therefore they are farre deceyued, which woulde
 haue the gospell so preached now a dayes, that men must speake neyther
 against impious doctrine, nor vngodlynesse of maners. We are further-
 more admonished with what weapons church men must fyght, be vlie with
 Scriptures, which Paule sayth are inspyred of God, and profytable to teach,
 improoue, exhorde and amende. 2. Timoth. 3. They are sowlely therfore de-
 ceyned, that say the heretikes must not be conuined by scriptures, bicause
 they are to obscure and darke to conuince them by. Wherefore they flye vn-
 to counsellors, and to the determination of the church. But therein they
 fare, as if one should take from a souldyours going to the battayle, his
 sworde of yron, and giue him one of leade. As though the au-
 thority of mans constitutions were greater than the holy

ghost which speaketh in the scriptures. Finally, as

we haue oftentimes aduertised, here is re-

peated the ende of preaching the gos-

pell, which is to beleue in Iesus

Christ our Lord & sauour:

to whom be praise, ho-

nour, power, and

glory, for ever.

Amen.

In the church
it is necessary
that the wic-
ked be cons-
futed.

Titus. i.

The ministers
must fyght
with scrip-
tures.

The

The. xix. chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The. Cxxv. Homelie.

IT fortuned whyle Apollos was at Corinth, that Paule passed through the vpper coastes, and came to Ephesus, and founde certaine disciples, and sayde vnto them, haue you receyued the holy ghost since you beleeued? And they sayde vnto hym, no, we haue not heard whether there be any holyc ghost or no. And he sayde vnto them wherewith then were ye baptised? And they sayde, with Iohns baptisme. Then sayde Paule, Iohn verily baptised with the baptisme of repentaunce, saying vnto the people, that they shoulde beleue on him, which shoulde come after him, that is on Christ Iesus. When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lorde Iesus. And when Paule layde his handes vpon them, the holyc ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophecyed, and all the men were about twelue.



The Gate of
Ephesus.

Because the Euaungelist Luke beganne to speake of the begynning of the Ephesian church, in the chapter going befoze, he maketh an ende of that hystorie now in this chapter, declaring howe Paule returned to Ephesus according to his promise, and there brought the church so happily begonne, vnto a perfection. But that the power of Gods grace, declaring it selfe by preaching of the gospel, may appeare the more, befoze all things we haue to consider Ephesus, the which writers report was the most famous Citie in all Asia. For

by reason it was of situation and fruitfulness of soyle so commodious for traffiquers, it grew to be passing riche. Beside the fame of false religion, which called gesses thither from all partes of the worlde. For there was the Church of Diana, the most sumptuous & gorgeous thing that was builded in all the worlde, bicause it appeareth that all Asia was occupied in the buylding thereof, about a two hundred and twentie yeares together, so that it was worthly accounted among the miracles of the worlde. In this Citie therefore raigned ryot and superstition, which commonly hath waityng on hit, as hir companions and handemaydes, magicall and curious artes, wherof we shall see, when we come to the place, that the Ephesians were most studious. Yet Paule so conuerted this Citie within the space of two yeares,

yeares, that there was founded a most famous Church there, vnto the which afterwarde Christ attributeth no small praise in his reuelation. In this place we haue partly to consider, the grace of God which Paule hereafter commendeth to the Ephesians, by this their owne example, as may be seene in his Epistle to them, seconde chapter, and partly here appeareth the power of the ministerie of the gospell, which neyther the authoritie of rooted superstition, neyther pryde and glozie of the worlde could hynder, but that Christs kingdome flourished, where the same gospell was preached. Moreover, Luke purposing to declare a storie of the things done by Paule at Ephesus, beginneth to tell fyrst howe he brought certaine persons to frame that baunted themselues of the gospell, but were not thoroughly instructed therein, and howe he adourned that church with the giftes of the holye ghost. Which hystorie as it serueth much to our instruction, so is it for this cause diligently to be considered, bycause dyuers men in times past, haue contended by authoritie of this place, to baptise those againe which before had bene baptised by Heretiques. At this day also the Anabaptistes abuse the same, a verie frowarde and phrentike kinde of persons, keeping infantes from their baptisme, and affirming that none ought to be baptised but such as are of yeares of discretion, and well infourmed in the principles and knowledge of Christ. But that both these and the olde wytters were deceyued, it shall easily appeare by the text it selfe, whereby it shall be proued, that Paule ment nothing lesse in this doing, than that which they go about to gather thereof.

For fyrst it is sayd Paule went about to examine certaine disciples, which he met withal, after he came againe to Ephesus. But it is not lykely that these and no moze had professed Christ, bicause we may gather a greater vtilitie of the gospell among the Ephesians, by that we heard in the ende of the .xviij. chapter. Nowe that Paule taketh these to examine rather then any other, this seemeth to be the cause, for that they liued not agreeably to the profession of christian men. For it is like it hapned at Ephesus, as it doth commonly in euery place, when the truth is fyrst preached, but the discipline of the church not fully established. For then we shall see many, which will professe to be gospellers moze for hatred of the olde state, then for loue of the truth, bicause they would vnder a cloke of the gospell, liue the moze licentiously. Bycause Paule perceyued that these were such a kinde of people, to the intent they might be brought to better conformitie and passe, and not perishe, like those that receyued the seede of the gospell into a stonie ground, Paule beginneth to examine them of their beliefe, and so to laye before their eyes, howe farre they were as yet from the marke of perfection. He demaundeth therefore if they had receyued the holy ghost: This question must be vnderstanded of the giftes of the holye ghost, which God at that time vsed to giue to the faithfull, that is to say, the knowledge of tongues, and exposition of the scripture, whereof we haue already manye times intreated. This place teacheth vs howe to know true christians, from false and counterfeyte. For although those speciall giftes of the holye ghost, which were sometime miraculously giuen, be at this day ceased, yet the promise of Iesus Christ remayneth fyrm, which promised his spirite to those that were his. And as Paule elsewhere sayth, they that haue not the spirite of Christ, can not be his members. And the other effectes of Gods holye spirite, are

Apocal. 2.

Paule examineth such as answered not in life to their profession.

Roma. 8.

as necessary at this daye, as the vnderstanding of tongues and interpretation of scripture was in tyme passed, namely the mortification of the olde man, the regeneration and innouation of our minde, purificacion, sanctification, and such other like. As many therefore as lacke all these things, it is certaine they boast in vaine of the faith & name of Christ, except we shall say that the spirite of Christ is an ydle and sluggish spirite.

The grosse
ignorance of
those which
truly professe
not Christ.

Psal. 33.
Psal. 51.
Esay. 61.

But let vs heare the aunswere of them whome Paule examineth, in which they bitter a very grosse and barbarous ignorance saying: No, we haue not heard whether there be any holy ghost or no. But howe were they ignorant of the holy ghost, which had heard so often mention of him in the lawe and in the Prophets: For it is out of doubt they were Jewes, because they were baptized with the baptisme of Iohn. Were they ignorant then of that saying of Moses which in the beginning of his hystorie wyrteth, that the spirite of God moued vpon the waters: Or else had they neuer heard that saying of Dauid: by the worde of the Lorde were the heauens made, and all the hostes of them by the breath of his mouth. Againe, take not thy holyc spirite from me. Besides they might haue knowne the voyce of the Messias speaking by the Prophet, the spirite of the Lorde God is vpon me. &c. How is it therefore that they say, they haue not heard whether there be any holy ghost or no: The aunswere is easie. For as Paule demaunded of the effectes of the holy ghost, so they make aunswere concerning the same, as if they should say: we being content with those things which we haue heretofore learned, seeke no farther, neyther care we whether there be any holyc ghost or no, which worketh such peculiar giftes in mens mindes, because we thinke the knowledge hereof to high for vs, and not to appertaine to vs. So these men be an example of carnall people, which professe the truth with their mouth, but haue denyed the power thereof as Paule sayth, and in daede refuse that, which with mouth they confesse. 2 Timoth. 3. Tit. 1. A great number of these are euery where to be founde, who being perswaded that the bare name of Christ is sufficient vnto blisse, doe little regarde the giftes of the holy ghost, namely the mortification of the fleshe, the renewing of the minde, regeneration, sanctification and such lyke. And through these mens faulte, it commeth to passe for the most part, that the doctrine of the gospell is so yll spoken of in the worlde. Therefore such must not be suffered, but be reprovued, and their dissimulation must be disclosed, that both they may vnderstande their errour, and other be the lesse offended.

Outwarde
profession
improueth
counterfeyt
christians.

So doth Paule in this place. For he gathereth nerer vpon them, & brgeth them to confesse, that they were not come to the christian perfection: for he sayth: In whose name then were you baptized: That is to say, what professed you, when you fyrst receyued the Gospell, and ioyned your selues to the Church of Christ: They aunswere they were baptised with the baptisme of Iohn, and so they testifie that they professed that doctrine & religion, wherof Iohn was a Minister and teacher, and therby they plainly shewe, they care little for any other than that. Nowe Paule here catcheth them, and holdeth them fast, and inferreth: Iohn (sayth he) baptised with the baptisme of repentance, saying to the people that they shoulde beleue on him that was to come after him, that is, in Iesus Christ, hereby teaching that Iohn required a farre other thing of his Disciples, than a bare profession of his name, and of the Gospell. For fyrst he appoynted repentance, wherevnto with

great

great earnestnesse he exhorted all degrees of persons, as appeareth, Luc.3. Neyther requyrezeth he onely repentaunce, but sheweth also remission of sinnes, preaching Iesus Christ, whose forerunner he was appoynted of God to be. He taught men to embrace him by true fayth, to followe him, to giue themselves wholly to him, bicause in him onely those things were to be founde which are fygured by outwarde baptisme. For who is able to per- forme them without the operation of the holy spirite? Therefore the glozve you haue in Iohn your teacher, is of so little sufficiencie, that his doctrine and baptisme wherewith you were baptized, compelleth you to go further, & so to cleaue vnto Christ, that being grafted in him through a lively fayth, and quickened with his spirite, you may declare by the very effectes of the holy ghost, that you are true Christians. And that this is the verie playne and vnbracked meaning of Paules wordes, the whole order of the hysto- ry proueth. Wherefore foolish is the error of them, which by this place go a- bout to proue that Iohn his baptisme and Christes was not all one, but di- uers. For that is a thing so farre from Paules meaning, that it rather prou- ueth howe men are sent by the baptisme of water that Iohn ministred, vnto Christ, in whome onely those thinges are to be taken holde of, the tokens whereof we receyue in baptisme. Also here is a generall rule confyrm- ed, how it is not to be bozne with, that they that will be taken for true wor- shippers of God, shoulde stay or rest vpon the authoritie of man, but that they ought to be bzged, to giue themselves wholly vnto Christ, to liue in him by the quickening of his spirite, least while they professe him with their mouth, they declare by their deedes, howe they be farthest of from him.

Furthermore, Luke ioyneth here vnto a moste prosperous ende of this hystorie. For these persons being conuict in their consciences, through the secrete working of the holye ghost, yelded vnto Paules reasons, and were baptized in the name of the Lorde Iesus. These wordes must not be ex- pounded of the baptisme of water, as though they receiued that againe. For so it shoulde followe that Iohns baptisme had not bene lawfull, nor sufficient to consecrate men vnto God. But that this is an absurde thing to be sayde, both the example of Christ teacheth vs which did vouchsafe to be baptised of Iohn, and so to become a copartener with vs, and also this thing proueth the same, for that we no where read how they were rebaptised, whom Iohn had baptised before, wherefore this place must be vnderstanded of the bap- tisme of fyre, the Minister or author whereof, Iohn before had sayde that Christ shoulde be. For the holye ghost was giuen in the likenesse of fyre, whereof we spake in the seconde Chapter of this booke. And it is ma- nifest that this worde baptising is often vsed for the giuing of the holy ghost, and his giftes. For so Iohn vseth it, speaking of Christ: he shall baptise you with the holy ghost and with fire. Christ being ready to ascende vp into hea- uen, vseth it in the same sense, saying: you shall bee baptised with the holye ghost within these fewe dayes. Which phrase of speach Peter vttered in the same sense, before the congregation, intreating of Cornelius conuersion. So in this place, Luke teacheth vs howe this worde baptising ought to be taken, whyle by waye of exposition, he addeth: And when Paule had layde his handes on them, the holye ghost came on them, and they spake with ton- gues, and did prophecie. Therefore by laying on of handes, they were con- secrated or appoynted onely vnto Christ, and after that followed the holye

The baptism
of Christ, or
of fyre.

Actes.ii.

ghost, according as we hearde came to passe at Samaria also. Wherevpon it appeareth that the olde wryters abused this place, whyle by authoritie hereof they contended that those ought to be newe baptised which had bene baptised by heretykes before. Herein they were deceyued that they thought Iohn and Christes baptisme of water was diuers. And the ignorance of the Anabaptistes is as great, that apply vnto the baptisme of water that which ought to be vnderstanded of the baptisme of fyre, that is to saye, of the receyuing and gyft of the holy ghost. But we haue principally to consider the ende and vse of the myracle, that is, howe God ment to confyrme and adorne the authoritie of his Gospell hereby among the Gentyles, as we haue already oftentimes declared. Let vs therefore beleeue the Gospell, whose credite and truth is proued by so many and notable signes and wonders. Let vs in lyfe aunswere to the profession of our sayth, that we being quickened with the spirite of Christ, maye liue in him: to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The. Cxxvj. Homelie.

AND he went into the Synagoge, and behaued himselfe boldlye for the space of three monethes, disputing and giuing them exhortations of the kingdome of God. When diuers waxed harde hearted, and beleeued not, but spake euill of the way, and that before the multitude, he departed from them, and seperated the disciples. And he disputed daily in the schoole of one called Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of twoo yeaes, so that all they which dwelt in Asia, hearde the worde of the Lorde Iesu, both Iewes and Greekes. And God wrought speciall myracles by the handes of Paule, so that from his body were brought vnto the sicke, Napkins and Parteleettes, and the diseases departed from them, and the euill spirites went out of them.



After the Euangelist Luke hath declared how

Paule had fullye instructed those twelue menne at Ephesus, which liued not aunswereable to their profession: he sheweth afterwarde how by the ministry of the same Paule the kingdome of God was spreadde farre and neare, both among the Ephesians, and ouer all the Countrie bordering vpon Asia.

And this present place comprehendeth the summe of this hystorie, in the consideration whereof, we must be the more diligent, bicause there are diuers thinges in euery part thereof, which serue for the common instruction of vs all. After this, he sheweth what was done with the reprobate and unbelieuing. Thirdly, he describeth the singuler profyte and commoditie of the Apostles labour and traueyle.

First, the Euangelist comprehendeth the whole summe of Pauls doctrine in fewe wordes, where he sayeth that he entred into the Synagoge, and there disputed thre monthes together boldly, and exhorted men to receyue the kingdome of God. Therefore as otherwheres, so here also, he preacheth fyrst to the Iewes. Hereby appeareth partly the great mercy of God towarde so rebellious and frowarde a people, and partly a moste feruent and sincere affection of charitie in Paule, which by so manye and grie-

Paule preaches
cheith to the
Iewes in the
Synagoge.

uous

uous iniuries coulde not be quenched. But bicause we haue hereof intreated diuers times already, let vs omit this poynt, and see what trade of teaching Paule vsed among the Ephesians, wherevnto there appertayne thre things, whereof Luke discourseth. First he nameth the place, and sayth he taught in the open Synagoge. That therefore that Paule diligently obserued in other places, he thought good to vse also at Ephesus, namely to teach in one certayne and publike place, although he knewe well the Jewes vsages, which in that place bare all the rule. Whereby we learne, that there must be a certayne place for doctrine to be taught in, and howe the same must not without some great cause be forsaken. For this is a thing verie profitable for the maintenance of true doctrine, and keeping vnder of false teachers, which priuily vse to creepe in, and to beguyle the vnwarre. For the which cause Christ himselfe vsed moste times to teache in the Temple, and in the open Synagoges, bicause he woulde not by his example defend them which without a cause, refuse to come vnto the Church, or else sowe false doctrine in corners, both which the Anabaptistes in our dayes ouerboldly vse to doe.

Secondly is declared the trade that Paule vsed in teaching. He spake freely and boldly, dissembling nothing. And first he disputed confuting the errors of the Jewes, wherewith they confounded and obscured the way of saluation, being of it selfe playne and simple. Next, he exhorted and counselled them to yelde vnto a truth. This is the best order of teaching, wherein these two things are necessary to be obserued, first that the aduersaries arguments be confuted, and that by effectuall reasons they be bryged to take holde of the truth, and earnestlye to followe it. For as truth can haue no place as long as lyes and errors beare rule: so fruitelesse and bayne shall the knowledge of truth be, vnlesse men earnestly embrace hit, and labour as it were, to be transformed into hit. Therefore Paule commaundeth the Minister of the worde not onely to teach, but also to exhort, rebuke, and to be instant in season and out of season. And Christ woulde haue those that were bidden to the wedding of the heauenly kingdome, to be compelled to come in. Therefore hylthye is the error of them, which saye a bare and literal treatie of the Scripture is sufficient in the Church, and will not suffer those things to be openly discussed in them, that serue for the instruction of all parties, as though our saluation stode onely in a naked and empty contemplation of things.

Thirdly, Luke sheweth the matter and argument of Pauls doctrine, where he sayth, he spake of the kingdome of God. For so are the assayes of our redemption and saluation called, the administrator and executor wherof the Prophetes long since declared, that the Messias shoulde be. But of this Messias, the Jewes had conceyued not onely false, but also very carnall and grosse opinions, by reason they misvnderstode the Oracles of the Prophetes. For they dreamed the kingdome of the Messias shoulde be here vpon earth, and hoped to enioy a golden worlde vnder him, such as had bene sometime vnder Salomon. With the which error the Apostles also being beguyled, promised themselves notable dignities and promotions, as maye easily be gathered by their contentions. And they among the Jewes also, whose myndes were more of their saluation, than of this earthly kingdome, did rather thinke it consisted in wearishe ceremonies, than in the merite of

Christ.

The place
for doctrine
must be pub-
like.

the place
of doctrine
must be public

The maner
how to teach.

2. Tim. 4.

The argu-
ment of the
Apostles
doctrine.

The king-
dome of God

Christ. Therefore Paule diligently declared the veritie of the kingdome of God, shewing that it was spirituall, not earthly, and that it consisted not in the vaine obseruation of Ceremonies, but in the merite of Christ, and in fayth, whereby we be grafted into him. This doctrine of Paule is to be had both in his Sermons, which Luke hath described in this booke, & also in his Epistles, so that there needeth no long rehearfall therof. Let vs marke how the Scriptures call our redemption and saluation the kingdome of God. For hereby the ende thereof is declared, which is that Satan being banquished, and the worlde ouercome, God might beare rule ouer vs as our king, as we desire in our prayer, saying: Let thy kingdome come. Wherefore they are false Christians, that gloze in the name of Christ, and yet let the Deuill rule in them, who can haue no communion or fellowship with Jesus Christ. Neyther can they be Christians which are out of the kingdome of God, bicause Christ came into the worlde, for no cause, but to restore his kingdome. But howe can they be in the kingdome of God, which suffer themselue to be ruled by the Deuilles spirite, and obey him in all thinges.

The vsage
and property
of reprobates

But bicause Christ can neuer be preached anye where so luckilye, but manye reprobates shall ryle agaynst his doctrine, hee declareth howe Paule dealt with them, but yet so, as he fyrst sheweth what they did. They hardened their heartes agaynst Pauls doctrine. This is the propertye of the wicked, the more they are byged with the worde of God, the more they harden their heartes, not that Gods worde is in the fault, but their owne selues. For where they haue not in them the seede of the children of God, they cannot knowe his voyce and worde, and therefore the more mightily the holy ghost worketh to bring them to order, the more spertelye vse they to resist him. Examples we haue euerywhere in Caine, Pharao, Saule, Iudas, and diuers other: whereunto woulde God we had not euerye day freshe examples ioyned. After induration it followeth that they wyll neyther beleue nor obey. Therefore they cast away the worde of God, as vayne and nothing pertayning vnto them. Besides a worse property than all this, namely rayling and slaundering, whereby they go about to bring Christs doctrine and religion in suspicion and enuy, amongst the people. For they follow the Deuils propertye, desiring to haue many partners and fellowes of his perdition. And by these steps doth impietie climbe vp vntill she be so high & she falleth into destruction. What doth Paule with these per-
sons? first he departeth fro them, least he should either more inflame them, or giue occasion of vnprofitable contention: and thys doth he according to Christs commaundement, which bade vs we should not cast pearles before Dogges and Hogges, and commaunded vs to shake the dust of our fete from vs, agaynst open obstinates. Then next he seperated those disciples from them, which had receyued the sounde doctrine, doing the duetie of a faithfull shepheard, whose chiefe care is, that the sounde sheepe be not infected with the contagiousnesse of the diseased. And yet Paule is not to be called a Schismatike for his so doing, although they bare the name of the church, and people of God, from whom Paule seuered his disciples. Yea, it is necessarie, that the good should auoyde the familiaritie and companye of the vngodly, bicause both they bycome hard hearted by the meanes, and many tynes also partakers of the vngodlyes punishment. See Apoc. 18.

Howe repro-
bates must
be delt with.

Math. 7.10.

Thirdeley,

Wherely, Paule teacheth daylie in the schoole of one Tyrannus, with what maner of thing it was, and howe it came to be so called, maketh no great matter, but it is lyke it was a publike place, and commodious to preache in. Let vs rather consider Pauls diligence, which could by no vntowardnesse of the wicked, be pulled from his duetie, but the more he seeth them rage, the more busily he holdeth on in teaching. Let all that are in office, eyther of the common weale, or of the ministerie, followe this example. And these were the exercises of the primitive Church, which we reade was busily occupied in the worde of God, which thing now a dayes is lesse regarded of none, than of those that will be called and accounted, for the successors of the Apostles.

Furthermore, let vs consider the profyte of the Apostles endeauor and traueple, which was manifolde. First the worde of God is spredde ouer all Asia, both among the Jewes and the Grekes. For so it often cometh to passe, that the fame of the gospel pierceth the mindes of those, who haue not yet heard the Minister speake. And the example of great and notable Cities, maketh not a little for this purpose, which the inhabitants nere about, are easily allured to follow. Next, God himselfe worketh with Paule, and by notable miracles beareth wytnesse to his doctrine. For Handkerchers and Parteleets, brought to those that had not seene the Apostle, draue away sicknesses and spirites. Let no man yet ascribe diuine or godly power to the Handkerchefes, or Parteleets, as they vse, which haue thrust into the Church, the superstitious worshipping of reliques. For it is expressely declared in this place, that God was the worker of the miracles, and to Paule is nothing attributed, more then the Ministerie. And surely it were very ridiculous, to attribute more vnto Pauls Handkerchefes, than to Christs cote, at the touching whereof the woman diseased of the bloudy fluxe was healed, not by the operation of the cote, but by the vertue and power of Christ, which he sayde went out from him. See Marke. 5. We must rather regarde the ende of those miracles, which serued to set forth Pauls doctrine, as we haue elsewhere declared. Here lyeth hid also a thirde vtilitie, namely how the sicke are healed, and the Demoniacks deliuered. For by the gospel health of soule is taught, and the Deuils kingdome destroyed, because Iesus Christ is that blessed seede of the woman, that was ordeyned to treade downe the Serpents head. Let vs therefore embrace him with true fayth, and wholly be knyt to him, that being deliuered from the tyrannye of the Deuill through his merite, we may attayne vnto true saluation, and raigne with him hereafter in heauen: to whom be praise, honor, power and glozy, for ever. Amen.

The fruite of
Euaungelike
endeuour is
manifolde.

The. Cxxvij. Homely.

THE N certaine of the Vagabunde Jewes, exorcistes, tooke vpon them to call ouer them, which had euill spirites, the name of the Lorde Iesus, saying: we adiure you, by Iesu whome Paule preacheth. And there were seauen sonnes of one Sceua a Iewe and chiefe of the priestes which did so. And the euill spirite aunswered and sayde, Iesus I know, and Paule I knowe: but

who

who are yee? And the man in whome the euill spirite was, ranne on them, and ouercame them, and preuayled against them, so that they fledde out of that house naked and wounded. And this was knowne to all the Iewes and Greekes also, which dwelt at Ephesus, and feare came on them all; and the name of the Lorde Iesus was magnified. And many that beleued came, and confessed, and shewed their workes. Many of them which vsed curious crafts, brought their bookes and burned them, before all men, and they counted the price of them, and founde it fiftie thousande siluerings. So mightily grewe the worde of God and preuayled.



I heard yester day, howe God confyrmeth Pauls Apostleshyp, and the authoritie of the doctrine of the gospel, among the Ephesians, by many and straunge miracles. It followeth now, howe he defended the same by an example of rare seueritie, against them, which went about by instigation of Satan, to abuse the name of Christ, which Paule preached, to get gaine thereby, and so to bring the authoritie of the gospel into suspition. The chiefe vse of which hystorie is, to make vs vnderstande, that God hath a regarde of his seruants, and that as many as go about to deface their authoritie, or are so bolde to abuse the name of Christ, at their lust and pleasure, shall not go unpunished. But that we may receyue the more profyte hereby, let vs consider all the partes of the hystorie in that order, that Luke rehearseth them.

The Iewes
Exorcistes.

The fyrst, conteyneth the description of the persons, and declareth what they did. They were of the Iewes, and none of the basest sort, but the sonnes of Sceua the chiefe priest. Next they are called Exorcistes, whereby it appeareth their profession was, to get money by exorcismes and coniuring of spirites, for the which cause, they vsed to go from place to place. These therefore seing the Apostle in the name of Christ, so mightily to controll spirites, and to worke such myracles, as the lyke before had not bene scene, inticed wth a hope of greater profyte and auayle, take vpon them a newe forme of coniuration, and vse to intermeddle the name of Christ therein. It shall be good to consider diligently wherof these kinde of people fyrst sprang among the Iewes. For although Moses appointed many and dyuers offices, among the Leuites, yet we see he maketh no mention any where of Exorcistes. It was therefore the inuention of man, & therefore a deceyueable thing, and contrary to the lawes of God. It seemeth to haue taken begynning of an olde fable, wherin it is reported, that Salomon had inuented, by inspiration of God, the science of coniuring, and exorcismes against spirites, and all kinde of diseases. So Satan woulde haue defaced the credite of the Prophetes myracles, as though they also had bene wrought, rather by magicall enchauntment, then by peculiar operation of Gods power, to confyrmeth their doctrine. And at length, hauing thus incensed them with a foolish and an vngodly emulation, he beganne to tell them wonders of the vnspeakeable power of the name of God, and taught them to make exorcismes, whereby foolish men set vp his kingdome, and pulled away the mindes of a great many, from the worshipping and calling vpon

Josephus
in the eighth
Booke of
his antiqui-
ties, the se-
cond chapter.

upon God. There remaine to this day, certaine tokens of this olde impietie, in the fables of the Jewes, which they haue deuised of their Schem Hamphoras, and in phisick, they vse many exorcismes, which is euident by little and little, crept in among the christians also, not without the great hinderance of true godlynesse. Of this profession therefore, were these seauen sonnes of Sceua the chiefe priest. And this is no small argument of great corruption, that the Bishops children gaue their studie, to wicked and deuillish deceptes, and sought to enrich themselves by an arte which was plainly forbidden by the worde of God. Further this example teacheth vs, howe farre error runneth, as soon as men beginne to swarue from the worde of God. For as it hapned among the Jewes, so we see it hath also come to passe in Poperie. For where they would not seeme, to want any of the orders that were in the primitive church, they haue also ordeyned Exorcistes, who though for the most part they bragged of a bare name, only, yet so farre hath the presumption of some of them gone, that they haue taken upon them to conuere the spirites, and soules of the deceased, wher in one of the least defences of Antichristes tirannie hath not consisted, to save nothing, howe through their wicked exorcismes, they haue polluted baptism, and Gods whole religion. Yea, by this meane it came to passe, that no kinde of men had more students of Necromantie and Magike, then the Monkes and Priestes, and even the highest priestes were not behinde in these wicked sciences. For the hystories of Syluester the seconde, Gregorie the seuenth, Alexander the sixte, and many other, are well knowen to euery man. Also we are taught, what to iudge of such, as attribute godly power, to holy names, and sentences taken out of scriptures, as though by these, eyther euill spirites coulde be driven away, or diseases and maladies ridde from men and beastes bodies: or that they which study south-saying, (an arte inuented by mans curiositie) could tell vs, what is to come, or what shall happen hereafter.

This is a Iudaicall or rather an heathen or a Gentile superstition, and not without a cause condemned by the lawes of God. For first vnto a vaine sounde of wordes, vnto drombe figures, and ceremonies full of horror, is attributed a power of helpe, which is no light offence, against the fyrst precept of the tables. For there we are commaunded to acknowledge God onely for our helper, to put our trust in hym onely, and to aske all our ayde and succour of him. Next, men are sent from the inuocation of God, vnto wicked sciences, as though thereby, God might be inforced to helpe vs, against his will. Moreover, the kingdome of the deuill, is no waye more fortified then this, who dyligently seeketh to make men looke for helpe and counsell in other thinges then in God, bicause that is the most common way for him whereby to deceyue and beguile men. Therefore we reade that these sciences in olde time were not without a cause abolished, both by the lawes of God and Emperours. And there remaine in the Popes law, Canons gathered out of most auncient counsels and fathers, which admonishe vs, to keepe such as were giuen to these artes from the communion of the faythfull. And here we must not giue eare to their objections which frame arguments of the succeesse and holynes of the wordes, thereby to defende their impious superstition. For they say a many are healed by these meanes, and that things otherwise impossible are hereby euery

De Trinit.
lib. 4. cap. 11.

day brought to passe. Againe they say, there is no offence in them, because they consist for the moze parte, vpon the holy names of God, or else vpon certaine notable sentences of holy scripture. The aunswere is easie to both these objections. We knowe that Satan is able to shewe wonders, but not without the sufferance of God. It is well knowne what he wrought in tymes past, by the Magicians in Egypt, and howe he burned Iobes cattle and seruantes by fyre from aboue. Yea Augustine testifieth, that he is able to doe straunge matters, because he can transfourme himselfe into an Angell of light. But doth it therefore become christian men, to beleue his suggestions, or to vse his helpe? why doe we not rather regarde the counsell of God, which suffereth Satan thus to doe, because he meaneth eyther to trye the fayth of his people, or else to send effectuell illusions, to those that haue deserved destruction? Let vs therefore stande fast in the fayth, least we swarue therefro, and be left wholy to Satans scorning and delusion. Againe, touching the holynesse of the wordes, we dispute not, but we say, the moze holy they are, the moze detestable it is to abuse them. For this is not the vse eyther of the names of God, or of his wordes, to serue for magicall mutterings, and with a baine sounde, to dzyue away eyther spirites or diseases, but to declare and set out vnto vs, the propertie of God, and his wyll. And if holynesse of wordes can excuse Magicians and enchaunters, then shall they also be excused, that commonly abuse the other holye and wholsome creatures of God. But howe baine these mens exercise is, that forme or maner of exorcisme which these exorcistes vse, abundantly declareth. For what is there in them to be reprehended? They vse this worde, adiuring, according to the example of most godlye men. Next, they adiure by the name of Iesus; and least they might seme to meane some counterfeyte Iesus, they plainly expresse him whome Paule preacheth. Notwithstanding, they are accused of impietie, because they vse the holye wordes naughtily, and without fayth, for their lucre sake and aduantage. Therefore away with them, that will seke such slender pretences for their Iewishe and heathen superstitions, and let vs not beleue them which dare abuse the names of God and his Christ.

The effect of
the exorcistes
is vnlucke.

But let vs consider the successe of this enterprise, which was very agreeable to their presumptuousnesse. For the euil spirit answereth these exorcistes and sayth: Iesus I know, and Paule I know, but who are you? And straightway he setteth the man whome he possessed, vpon them, & maketh hym to season on them, so strongly preuayling against them al, that he wel bette them, and set them packing out of the house naked. By the which argument it is most evidently perceyued that there is no power in holye wordes of themselves, whereby to dzyue away deylls, or any other euils, but that all such effectes depende vpon Gods prouidence, which sometime worketh myracles also enen by Infydels, when he seeth their helpe serue for the setting forth of his kingdom and glory. This example teacheth what all they maye looke for, which abuse the name of Christ, or his lawes, for their priuate lucre and aduantage. This is a common thing in these dayes. For what else doth the Pope, seing vnder the cloake of Christes name, he chalenge to him the supremacie in the Church. What else doe Masse Priestes, when peruertering the maner and order of the supper, they imagine Christ is at their becke, and chaunge the wordes of the supper into a coniuration, through

the

the power whereof they transubstantiate (as they say) the breade and wine into the body and bloude of Christ: What shall I speake of the keyes, vnder the pretence whereof, they haue burst into mennes consciences, ordeyned satisfactions, and expiations of sinnes, little or nothing differing from those which we reade, the heathen sometimes vsed. I lette passe infinite other things, which though God punish not by and by, as we see he did the children of Sceua, yet the iudgement of the Lorde (as Peter sayeth) sleepeth not, by the which long sithence, their punishments are appointed. We are moreouer taught by this place, howe great the power of our Sauour Iesus Christ is, seeing he can vse the Deuill be he neuer so lothe, to the setting forth of his kingdome. For who wyll thinke that he woulde willingly beare witnesse to Iesus Christ and Paule his seruaunt, and hurt his owne bondmen and instruments: He is yet compelled to doe both, because it seemeth so good vnto the Lorde, at whose sight and becke the Apostle writeth, that the Deuils tremble and quake. Why then are we afrayde of Satans craft or power, whose helpe we see Christ here vse at his pleasure so mightily: Nowe is the Prince of this worlde throwne out of his kingdome, which so long he hath so falsely claymed & vsurped. And it is no harde thing for them to overcome him, that are by fayth grafted in Christ.

2. Peter. 2.

Iacob. 2.

Nowe let vs come to the last part of this hystorie, which conteyneth in it manifolde and singular fruite. First this thing was knowne amongst all the Ephesians, who were all stricken of God, whome they sawe so seuerely reuenge the abusing of his sonne, and of his name. This is the lawfull vse of Gods iudgements, to put in our mindes a sense or feeling of Gods religion. But O miserable wretches that we be, which maye seme altogether to be waxed deafe, seeing we are moued with no examples, that God daily sheweth vppon the blasphemers and contemners of his name and worde. Next, many of them that belæued came of their owne accorde, and confessed their doings openly. This is an euident argument of the mortification of the fleshe, which being most desirous of honoz and estimation, can hardly be brought to confesse she hath erred. But the desire of truth and glozve of God ouercommeth all affections of the fleshe in those that belæue. By this place it appeareth what maner of confession the Scriptures requyre of vs, verily publike and open, which serueth to the setting forth of Gods glozve, and to the amendement of many. Therefore their ignorance is very grosse, which thinke by this example to establishe auricular confession, wherewith this confession that Luke here speaketh of, hath no affinitie. For these Ephesians come of their owne accorde, and confesse their olde errors, giuing thanks vnto God, which had boughsafed to deliuer them from them. But the Pope enforceth men agaynst their willes, to confesse their secret faultes also, which no manne was priuie to before. We reade they made confession but once, where the Pope commaundeth vs oftentimes to confesse. They made open confession, and that before all men. But the Pope teacheth vs to whisper our sinnes in the eare of the Priest onely. They by their confession sought nothing but the glozve of God. The Pope commaundeth to aske remission of sinnes and satisfaction of the Priest. What stande we long: The more diligently a man examineth the circumstances of this dowing, the more manifestly it shall appere, auricular confession is rather ouerthrowne than confyrmed by this example. But lette vs returne to the Ephesians,

The true vse
of Goddes
iudgements,
and an ex-
sample of true
repentaunce.

whereof many were hitherto giuen to curious artes, but are now so touched with the feeling of Chzilles spirite, that they openly burne their booke on heapes, where we vnderstande not onely their Magicall booke, but also all other booke, that serued rather vnto fruitelesse and offensive studie, than vnto godlynesse, such as for the most part are the booke of Astrologie, Geomantie, soothsaying booke, and booke of loue, and such like. He sheweth also the pryce or value of the booke, which after the Germanes account amounteth to the summe of sixe thousande sixe hundred, threescore and sixe flozenes. By this meane the godly persons thought to take all occasion of offence, both from themselves, and from other in time to come. And this is the true propertie of them that vnfeynedly repent, that they hate the instrumentes of sinne, as much as the sinne it selfe, and are not grieved to lose those things, which they knowe had sometime bene occasion of their fall, be they neuer so precious. Therefore they cannot be iudged to haue truly repented, nor to vnderstande the heynousnesse of their offences, which vse to retaine and keepe in these dayes, the instrumentes of their euill dooinges, such as are Images, superstitious deckinges of Churches, booke that teach superstition, amorous writings, wanton apparell, and innumerable such like. Last of all Luke sayth that the worde of God grewe mightily, and was confirmed in the hearts of the Disciples, which was an effect of their former studie. For the worde of God bleseth marueylously to growe, if all impediments be taken out of the waye that may hinder it. Let vs therefore followe the example of this famous Church, that increasing daily more in fapth, we may become persfite men in Iesus Chzist our Lozde: to whom be prayse, honoz, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The. Cxxviij. Homelie.

AFTER these things were ended, Paule purposed in the spirite, when hee had passed ouer Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Ierusalem, saying: After I haue bene there, I must also see Rome. So sent hee into Macedonia, two of them that ministred to him, euen Timotheus and Erastus, but he himselfe remayned in Asia, for a season. The same tyme there arose no little adoe about that way. For a certayne man named Demetrius a siluer smyth, which made siluer shrines for Diana, was not a little benefyciall to the craftes men. Whome he called together with the workemen of like occupation, and sayd: Sirs, you knowe that by this craft we haue aduauntage. Moreouer, you see and heare, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, thys Paule hath perswaded and turned awaye much people, saying, that they be not Goddes which are made with handes. So that not onely this our Craft commeth into perill, to be set at naught, but also that the Temple of the great Goddesse Diana shoulde be despyed, and hir magnificence shoulde bee destroyed, whome all Asia, and the worlde worshippeth.

Bycause



Because Paule knewe that the Lorde had not appoynted him to be a teacher of one Nation onely, therefore he thought he woulde not serue still in one Nation, but preach the Gospell euerywhere vnto all people. Yea, he thought that on him chiefly lay the charge of all Churches, as he declareth in his later Epistle to the Corinthians. Wherefore being not contented here and there to gather Churches together, he goeth to see and visite those he had gathered and ordeyned, least anye thing might fall doone agayne eyther by the wearysomnesse of man, or by the craft and subtiltie of the Deuill. We haue seene hitherto diuers ensamples of lyke endeuer, wherevnto this may also be annexed, that Luke telleth in the beginning of this place, to the which he ioyneth a newe hystorie of sedition, rayled against Paule, whereby his purpose of visiting the Churches, for a time was stopped.

The authoz of this deuise and counsaile, was the holy spirite, by whose conduct and guyding, we haue often shewed that Paule beganne and tooke all his matters in hande. He purposed to go into Macedonia and Achaia, to visite and confyrme the Churches of the Philippians, Thessalonians, and Corinthians, and also to gather an almesse or reliefe among them, to cary to the needy brethren in Syria, as may euidently be gathered of his Epistles to the Corinthians, which iourney being ended, he ment to go to Rome, to bestowe some gift of the spirite vpon the faythfull there also, and to receyue mutuall consolation of their beliefe. Yet bicause he woulde seme to doe nothing rashly, he sent Timotheus and Erastus which were of his familiers before, meaning himselfe to followe not long after, if that bypore beganne at Ephesus, had not stayed him a good many of dayes. Againe, by this example it appeareth howe needefull it is for the conseruation of the Church, to be very carefull, seeing the moste paynefull Apostle which had as yet so much to doe, was faine so often to go visite and confyrme the Churches before ordeined. Therefore they bewray their fylthy sluggishnesse & wicked arrogancy, that thinke the zeale which the Ministers now a daies vse in this behalfe, is vnprofytable or superfluous. Also in Paule appeareth the property of true faith, bicause he is not ydle and slothfull, but maketh men diligent in their vocation. For where he burneth in the zeale of the glozy of God, and loue of hir neighbour, it cannot be that he will stande still ydle, no he will be overcome with no traueyle or daunger. Which is moze euident by this onely example of Paule, than needeth long profe. Let euery man apply this to himselfe, and by following it, declare his faith, by his works. Moreover, it appeareth that fayth is circumspect also, bicause Paule whome the holye ghost guided in all his doings, sendeth such men before him, as he knewe were trustye. For as true belauers, when they haue the expresse commaundement of God, followe it without any staggering, although the fleshe suggest diuers things to the contrarye: so in other thinges, whereof they haue no certaine commaundement of God, they doe all thinges prudently and circumspectly, for feare they might obscure the glozy of God, and giue the weake an occasion of stumbling. And this is the safest way we can vse in taking of things in hande. &c.

Paule is
mynded to go
from Ephesus.

Roma. 1.

Howe

Paulus purpose is dis-
appointed.

Howbeit, although Paule was scarce anye where receyued with more good will, than among the Ephesians, and had taught there two yeares together, with great vtilitie and successe, so that not onely many of the people belæued, but also he had gotten many of the chiefe of Asia to be his friends, as hereafter shall appeare: yet at length he fyndeth no better curtesie than that we haue hearde he foinde so often in other places, namely troubles, and publike sedition, wherewith he was so tossed and turmoyled, that he rekeneth the daunger he was in at Ephesus, among the greatest troubles that euer he was in. For he writeth that he there fought with beastes, and was in despayre of his life 1. Cor. 15. 2. Cor. 1. &c. Luke describeth all this historie marueylous diligently, bicause in it as in a glasse, the propertie and condicions of the enemies of truth, their craftes and weapons, are set forth to be beholden: and also it appeareth howe God bleth moste faythfully to defende both his seruants and the truth. In this place fyrst he proponeth the summe of the matter, and then next he sheweth the beginners of the sedition, with the oration of Demetrius, who was the cause and stirrer of all this tragedie, incensing the mindes of his adherentes against Paule.

Todayne
vppon.

At that time (sayth he) there arose much adoe about that way. He calleth the Christian sect or religion a way which the aduersaries woulde haue oppressed. The time is diligently to be obserued which sheweth vs howe this stirre was made, when Paule had set al things in an order at Ephesus, & was minded to go to the Macedonians and Corinthians, and had sent two of his companions before, to prepare all things necessary. By which example we are admonished, that we must alwaye be watchfull, but chiefly when matters seeme in safetie, and out of all daunger. For Satan neuer resteth, but being driven out of his holde, seeketh meanes to returne againe, as Christ teacheth. And there want not examples of such, as being grienously offended with todayne crosses and troubles, haue fallen from the faryth. Let it yet comfort vs, that how much so euer our enimie rage and rane, yet hath he no power vppon Christ, ne yet vppon those which by fayth are grafted in Christ, yea being long agoone vanquished, he doth but lighten as out of a Basen, and sheweth counterfeyte scarmuches of fyght, whereby to fraye vntryed and vnkylfull myndes.

Math. 22.

Iohn. 14.

Demetrius is
author of the
vppon.

But let vs see the author and instruments of this vppon Demetrius the Siluer Smith was the Capitaine of them, a welthy man, and one that made Syluer shrynes, and such other gay gære, in the honor of Diana, and thereby was an occasion that the men of his occupation gate much money. Diana was worshipped (as we shewed aboue) among the Ephesians, vnder the name of πολυμαθεος Multimannuia, whome they being seduced by gentile superstition, belæued to be a Goddesse, that nourished and fedde all lyuing creatures. The Temple of this Goddesse was the famousst and most sumptuous in all the worlde, vnto the which there were Pilgrimages instituted, from all places of Asia, both farre and nere, which was the cause that they that made implementes of superstition, gat very much daylie by straungers that came thether. Therefore they could not abyde the doctrine of Paule, which at once ouerthrew both their superstition and all their hope of gayne. These men therefore being called togyther by Demetrius, go about to oppresse Paule by sedition, knowing that by no force of reason they were able to conuince hym. Here therefore it appeareth as evidently as

may

may be, that the occasions of sedition, ought not to be ascribed to the gospell or ministers thereof. For as the sayth that they preache, butteth vs to God, so it chiefly commendeth vnto vs charitiue and concord. And here Demetrius is expressely named, for the begynner of this sedition, and not Paule, who for two yeres before had so taught, that he had shewed no token at all of a seditious person. And of this kinde there are many examples, both in this booke, and also in other hystories. Whereby we learne, that they ought not ouer soone to be credited, which accuse the gospell and preachers thereof of sedition, but let vs searche for the truth farther, and it shall appeare, that they commonly are the fyrst begynners of sedition, which would lay the fault thereof vpon other. And such for the most parte are they, which lyke Demetrius and his Complices, eyther lyue of craftes and trades forbidden by God, or else hunte after game and pleasure. The standard bearer among these men is the Byshop of Rome, and his creatures, the Cardinals, Byshops, Monkes, and priestes. For the greatest share of lucre and aduantage by superstition cometh to hym. He causeth his creatures also to get much money, while being marked with his badge, he gyueth them power to buye and sell, that is, to make marchaundize of Gods worde, and to chop and chaunge the same. But all these can not abyde the truth of the gospell, which lyke a sharpe whyppe, shaken with the hande and spirite of Christ, dzyueth all marchaunting out of the Temple, and ouerturneth the tables of the exchaungers of money. Next vnto these are Kinges, Princes, and all the great trayne of noble menne in this worlde. For superstition is gainefull vnto them also, because vnder the pretence hereof, they prouide for numbers of their children, and the defence of their dignitie, whyle by their authoritie, they thrust them into Bishoppricks, Abbacies, and Cardynalshippes, which perhaps otherwys should be set to Marchaunts trade, or to get their lyuing with their hands, which sameth to them the heynewest matter in the worlde. Nowe both these sortes togyther, helpe the inferiour sort of the commons, which lyue eyther by Monkes and priestes, or by these nobles. For these commons being of a seruite nature and disposition, and fearing to dye for famishment, are soone perswaded to anye thing by these Demetrii. Adde vnto all these such as eyther desire and seeke to lyue licentiously, or else such as follow their pleasures and gaires, by mischieuous meanes, as are blurers, whozemongers, drunkardes, hyred Souldyours, and all such other lyke. For these people because their workes be naught, would not be reprimed, and therefore they wishe the lyght of the gospell, which betrayeth their doings, at once extinguished. These I say are the begynners of sedition, against the gospell, as no man can denye, which will dyligently viewe the blage of our dayes.

But chiefly Demetrius oration is to be considered, the proposition and state whereof is, that Paule ought not to be suffered, which by his doctrine, draboeth men from the olde religion. He confyrmeth his proposition wth thre reasons or arguments, which vse to be of great force in the kinde deliberatiue. The fyrst is taken of commoditie or profyte, wherevnto the hungrye and poorer sorte haue alwayes a specyall regarde, you knowe (sayth he) that by this craft, we haue aduantage. What remayneth then but that you must perishe for hunger, if you suffer your occupation to be ouerthrowne

The Demetrii of our age.

Demetrius oration.

uerthrowne by Paules doctrine: The second reason he borroweth of necessity: you see and heare, that not onely at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paule hath perswaded. &c. Therefore this matter can be driven of, or borne with no longer, but it is needfull with speede to prouide a remedie. The thirde argument he fetcheth of honestie saying: Not onely this our craft commeth into perill to be set at naught, but also the Temple of the great Goddesse Diana should be despised, and hir magnificence destroyed, whome all Asia, and the worlde worshypeth. As though he should say: O companions what infamie shall we purchase vnto our selues, if we suffer that religion to decay amongst vs, which hath bene so many ages of so great authoritie in all the worlde: Also in this oration appeare the craftes and blages of the wicked, who incensed and led with the desyre of priuate lucre onely, wyll yet be counted for the defenders of religion. Such an one doth the holye ghost describe Caiaphas to be. Iohn. 11. Such are the talkes of the Monkes in these dayes, and of all those which bpholde and maintaine Poperie, amongst whome a man shall scarce fynde one so plaine, as this Demetrius, which doth not dissemble, but that his chiefest respect was for hys priuate gaine and aduantage. Let vs learne to suspect these clamours, and to marke better wherevnto they tende. It appeareth also in this place, with what arguments most times the wicked vse to defende their superstition. Weryly with the consent of the vnlearned multitude, with the authoritie of kings and princes, with the pompe and shewe of outwarde holynesse, with contynuaunce of tyme, but chiefly with the pretence of priuate gaine and aduantage. These things are common now a dayes, if a man would marke the talke of our aduersaries. But it is a foule fault for Christians, to vse the argumentes of the heathen, in matters of religion, which ought to be iudged and determynd by scripture onely. Finally, by Demetrius obone saying may be gathered what force and power the gospell is of. For he confesseth that by Paules teaching, in two yeares space, that famous temple was brought in daunger, which all Asia was in buylding, about the space of two hundred and twentie yeares, as we declared erewhyle, and which the barbarous people spared in the Persian warres, where they set fyre on all other churches. He complayneth also that all mennes mindes for the most part were turned from worshipping of Diana: But it is euident, this coulde be done by no mannes power or authoritie. We are also taught that men haue then profyted well in the Gospell, when their mindes are wholly turned from superstition and Idolatrie. For as long as they hang in suspence hereof, it is certaine their mindes are not lightened with the truth. Let vs therefore examine our selues after this rule, and casting awaye all superstition, turne with feruent sayth, to Iesus Christ our Lorde: to whom be prayse, honoz, power, and gloze for euer.

Amen.

The. Cxxix. Homelie.

WHEN they hearde these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cryed out saying: Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And all the Citie was on a rore, and they rushed into the common hall with one assent, and caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Pauls companions. When Paule would haue entred in vnto the people, the Disciples suffred him not. But certayne of the chiefe of Asia (which were his friendes) sent vnto him, desiring him that he would not preace into the common hall. Some therefore cryed one thing, and some another, and the congregation was all out of quiet, & the more part knewe not wherefore they were come together. Some of the company drew forth Alexander, the Iewes thrusting hym forwardes. But Alexander beckened with the hande, and would haue gyuen the people an aunswere. When they knewe that he was a Iewe, there arose a shoute almost for the space of two houres, of all men crying: great is Diana of the Ephesians.



The Euaungelist Luke by the instinct of the holye Ghost, setteth out in thys booke, not onely the persecutions layde vpon the Apostles, by Magistrates and order of lawe, but also the raging seditions of the furious commons, amongst which this deserueth to be counted the chiefe, which was begonne by Demetrius agaynst Paule at Ephesus. The vse of this and all other lyke serueth for two causes specialle. First, they serue for the instruction of the Ministers, that they be not offended with the tumultes of the seditious commons, as at anye straunge and rare thing, nor leaue not their duetie vndone, for feare of them. But rather they must consider, that the Church in thys worlde, is as it were a Barke or vessell tossed to and fro, with wynde and tyde, whose Pilot Christ, seemeth sometime to be on sleape, as the storie of the gospel declareth. Math. 4. Let them also remember, that it can not scarcely be chosen, but seditions must be, bycause there are euerye where so many, which can not brooke the doctrine of the gospel, for that it maketh eyther agaynst their gaine, dignitie, or licentious lyving. And our sayour Christ prophesied, that not only men of our owne Countrie, but also those of one house should be at deuision, and hate one an other. Let it suffice Ministers, that they giue no cause of tumult to the seditious, but if being ledde with naughty affections they take occasion, let them commyt the successe vnto God, and in the meane season apply their vocation, bycause (as Ambrose sayth.) It lyeth in vs not to prouoke the people, but to appease them being vp, it is in the hande of God onely. Moreover, the description of these tumultes make for the instruction of all men in generall. For they teach vs, that we should not rashely impute the causes of vprore to the gospel, and to the Ministers thereof, as men vse commonly to doe, but that euery man shoulde

fift booke
and. 33.
chapter.

consyder the case througely, and then they shall be founde the begynners of tumultes, which will not be ruled by the gospel. And such an one we haue heard Demetrius was, whome all they directly follow, which in these dayes vse to disturbe and hynder the gospel. But bicause we haue lately spoken abundantly hereof, nowe let vs consyder the sedition, and how Paule vsed himselfe in the same.

i.
The description of
the sedition.

Luke describeth it verie dyligently, rehearsing euery circumstance thereof. And fyrst begynning with the cause, he sayth, they were all fylled with wozath, which as it is an euill Counsellor in taking anye thing in hande, so as Iames sayth, it worketh nothing that is right or good. The cause of their wozath was the daunger and losse of their gayne and auailles, which as Demetrius a whyle ago sayde, was nere at hande, and perhaps euery one of them perticularly beganne in some part to feele the same. For the worlde can abyde nothing lesse than to haue their aduantage turned awaye or dyminished. And at this daye, there is none other cause of the disturbaunces vsed agaynst the gospel. The Popes and Bishops are angry, bicause they see their dignitie decayeth. The Monkes and Priestes are offended, by reason their Kitchyns ware colde, throughe the losse of their market of holynesse. The Princes and Nobilitie are grieved, for that their children are put by the possession of ecclesiasticall goodes, who alwayes tyll nowe lyued lyke Lordes of the same. The poorer sort of the commons which were wonte to flatter the Priestes, and the Nobilitie, for lyuing frette and fume. Foles, Jesters, Bawdes, Cookes, Harlottes, gelded men, bugged bopes, and all lyke dregges of most fylthy wretches, whome these (I warrant you) holpe fathers hytherto prouyded of lyuings, stampe and stare at thys gære. And all these in their heate and rage, runne to counselles to consult, howe they maye breake in sunder the bandes of Christ, as is described in the seconde Psalme, what good therefore shall we hope for of all these counselles, where wozath is the President, a blynde and frowarde Counsellor. Thys done they turne to playne exclamations, and crye: Great is Diana of the Ephesians. By the which saying, they testifie that they wyll defende the worshop of Diana, euen with their bloude. They craftily make religion a cloke for their belly and lucre. And the men of these dayes, treade euen in their steppes, which wyth as little sobrietie, haue the Saintes, and the blessed Virgin in theyr mouthes agaynst vs, whose honour they promise they will defende. Although our men in dede be more impudent. For it is not without a cause that the Ephesians so exclaymed, bycause Paule openly spake against the worshyp of Diana, and was a professed enimie thereof. Which of vs denyeth the saintes? who speaketh against the right worshop of Marie? who derogateth any thing from hir dignitie and honoz? We confesse she is mother to the sonne of God, we confesse she is a Virgin vndefyled and vnspotted. We confesse the Saintes were the chosen instrumentes of God, and that nowe they lyue in heauen, in blisse. But inuocation and godlye honour, we saye is due to God alone. What iniurie is this, if we teach the same, that they sometime taught, in defence whereof they thought good to laye downe their lyues? It is therefore a manifest flaunder, that they saye we be enymies to the saintes. Thirldy, the whole Citie was in an bpzoze. Hereof Demetrius onely was the authoz. By which example we are taught,

what

iiij.

what mischief sodainely maye arise of a fewe seditious persons. For as a little sparkle may set fyre on an whole house, the flames whereof beyng caried with the wynde, catche the whole stræte vppon a sodaine: so sedition rysing of a fewe beginners and contempned at the fyrst, euen by the onely fame thereof, spreadeth it selfe abroade, and compasseth about whole common weales, not without the present daunger of all mennes goodes. The holye Scripture sheweth vs examples in Core, Absolon, Sæba, and dyuers others. The lyke are also to be sene in the stozies of the Gentyles, amongst which that enterpryse of Catiline is very notable, which brought the Romanes common weale, in great hazard by his seditious attempts, euen then when it most flourished. Let Magistrates hereby learne to stoppe those betymes as are lykely wyll one daye be seditious, suche as commonly ryotous persons are, and as manye as loue religion for lickers sake. Who if they be not kept vnder by seueritie of lawes, will at length poure out their pestilent poyson, to the calamitie of the publyke weale. Fourthly, they rushe into the common hall by vyolence, and pluck away Caius and Aristarchus Pauls companions. Therefore they worke wyth force, and vse all kynde of crueltie agaynst Innocentes. For although the tempest of sedition manye tymes vse to catche good men, which are enforced agaynst their wyll, to take some part: yet for the most part, the greater number are euill, whereby it commeth to passe, that seditions are most hurtfull to good men and guiltlesse. Therefore they are verpe fooles, that hope for anye goodnesse of sedition, which they must wyth all dyligence go about to resist, that desyre the prosperitie or safetie of their common weales.

But what doth Paule in the whottest of this sedition: he woulde haue stept forth, and gone in amonge them, to haue allwaged these raging rebelles, least his companyons shoulde haue bene hurt, which were haled awaye, as we hearde euen now. But hys Disciples woulde not suffer hym, chiefly those great men of Asia that were his friendes, who well knewe the propertie of the people. And in this place a man may beholde a whole heape of notable vertues in Paule at once. For it is a singuler ensample of fayth and sincere friendship, in him that woulde not leaue hys companyons in daunger and perill. And if Paule made so great an account of two of his friendes, that he woulde iopardie his lyfe for their sakes, what a care thinke we, had he of whole congregations, which he knewe were redæmed with the bloude of Christ: Furthermore there appeareth a marueylous constancie and fortitude in him, which woulde aduenture hymselfe amongst the furious commons. For what other was thys, then to commit hymselfe to the rage of the sea, or else to the fyre: But he respected the promises of Christ, wherewith he was so emboldened, that no daunger coulde feare him, to doe his duetie. It is also a token of singuler modestie, that he yeldeth to better counsell, and doth not obstinately vze that, which was both daungerous and had little profyte ioyned therewith. Let euerye manne followe this example, bicause we see many times the greatest wyttes, in their owne daungers, knowe least what waye or counsell to take. It is also worthe the noting, that Paule hath great men to his friendes. A fewe such we reade Christ had, amongst whome Nicodemus and Ioseph are counted the chiefe. Iohn. 12. 3. Math. 27.

iiiij.

What Paule
did in the se-
dition.

Here the error of the Anabaptistes is refelled, which saye that a christian ought to beare no office. But chiefly we learne howe vaine the defence and succour of the worlde is, seing their authoritie coulde not keepe Paule from daunger of sedition. It becommeth vs therefore, to put all our hope and trust in God alone, and not in Princes, or in the children of men, for there is no helpe in them. Psalme. 146. And that this is the vse of this present example, Paule teacheth in hys seconde Epistle to the Corinthians, the fyrst chapter.

A confused
countenance
of sedition.

Nowe Luke commeth to the seditious, of whome he reporteth two things. First, some (sayth he) cryed one thing, some an other, and the most part knewe not wherefore they were come togyther. This is a peculiar thing in the time of sedition, that like a flowing streame, it carpyeth many away with it, being vtterly ignoraunt of the meaning thereof, and a great many good men also euen against their will. Therefore such would be appeased rather by counsell and reason, then by force. For if force be vled, commonly the Innocentes drinke for it, the wicked beginners stylye slipping awaye. A dolorous example whereof Germany sawe, when in the yere of our Lorde, a thousande, fyue hundred, twentie and fyue, horrible streames of husbandmens bloude almost ouerflowed hir. Let Princes therefore haue in minde rather that saying of the Prophet, where they are commaunded to holde their subiects liues deere. Psalm. 72. Moreover, the Jewes thrust forwarde one Alexander, who by all likelyhode was one of Pauls friendes and drew him forth, because they ment to bring him in daunger. He desired silence and would haue given a reason and an accounte of things attempted, touching religion. But when they perceyued he was a Jewe, and an enemie of heathen superstition, they turne to their furious exclamations againe, and for two houres long fylle all the Citie with the noyse of their Diana. For as the belly lacketh eares, so commonly they are deafe and wyll heare no reason, which moue sedition for the bellies sake. And this is the contynuall practyse of the wicked, to barke against the truth wth furious clamours, which otherwyse they knowe is inuincible. In the meane season the faintnesse of a great many is reprovued, who knowing the truth, are yet altogither colde in the confessing thereof, and regarde not the zeale of the vngodlye, whome they see bolde euen in the defence of superstition. Let vs learne therefore, what state the truth standeth in, in this worlde, and beyng armed wth the constancie of fayth, let vs stoutely beare out whatsoeuer God sendeth, that we maye vanquish the all aduersity, through Iesus Christ our Lorde: to whom be all praise, honour, power, and glorye, for euer.
Amen.

The. Cxxx. Homely.

WHEN the towne Clarke had ceased the people, he sayde, yee men of Ephesus, what man is it that knoweth not, howe that the Citie of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great Goddesse Diana, and of the Image that came from heauen? Seing then that no manne sayth here against, yee ought to be content, and to doe nothing rashly, for ye haue brought hyther these men, which are neyther robbers of Churches, nor yet despyfers of your Goddesse. VVherefore if Demetrius and the craftesmen which are with him, haue a matter agaynst any manne, the lawe is open, and their Rulers, let them accuse one another. But if you go about any other thing, it shall bee determined in a lawfull congregation. For we are in ieoperdye to be accused of this dayes vprore, forasmuch as there is no cause, whereby we maye giue a reckoning of this concourse of people. And when he had thus spoken, hee let the assembly depart.



WE haue hearde the sedition that Demetrius raised against Paule, described by Luke. Where beside the propertie of the furious people, we noted diuers pointes wherein Paule was chiefly to be considered. First, he boldly and constantlye would haue ventured to go in among the people, mynding to haue giuen an account openly both of his fayth and doctrine. But seeing he coulde not be permitted so to doe, he kepeth him among his friends, committing the whole successe of the matter vnto God, yet so as he swarued not a nayle breadth from the truth, nor yet dissembled anye thing for cowardlye feare. Which example admonisheth vs, what we shoulde doe in lyke case, or in open persecution. Before all things it becommeth vs according to Peter the Apostles precept, to be ready to giue an account to euerye manne, that demaundeth it. 1. Pet. 3. But when the enemies shall so raue, that there is no place for truth and the confession therof, we must procede warily and wiselye, least we put our selfe in daunger without Gods calling, and so tempt him. In the meane season let vs be constaunt in acknowledging the truth, and wayte the Lordes leysure, who neuer forsaketh them that put their trust in him, and who by his wisdom and power is able easily to cease and alaye all cruell tempestes. This present hystorpe sheweth vs an ensample hereof, where God appeareth a very daungerous sedition to all seeming, by the help of one Scribe or Towneclarke, and such a one as the whole course of his Oration proueth manifestly, to haue had no vnderstanding in Chri- stes religion, where the power of God appeareth the more, seeing he bleth the reprobate and their helpe in the defence of his people. Let vs examine the Towneclarke's Oration throughout all the partes thereof, the chiefe ende whereof is to repress the seditious tumult of the vnruly people, him- selfe in the meane season being little carefull for religion.

He beginneth with that y most vered these seditious. They stode in great feare of their Diana, for hir sake they so cryed out, as we haue heard before, bicause if the worshipping of hir were layde awayne, they sawe their gayne was

Howe Chri-
stians shoulde
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selues in time
of sedition.

Dianas ymage
come from
heauen.

In his se-
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falle religion
cap.19.

was lyke to be gone. But the Towneclarke sayth, this was no iust or sufficient cause for them to make such a stirre. For what man is there (sayeth he) but knoweth that the Citie of Ephesus is a worshipper of the great Goddesse Diana, and of the Image that came from heauen. As who shoulde saye: To what purpose repeate you so often with furious clamor, the name of Diana? Who denpeth you to be hir honourers? Who knoweth not that Dianas Image came downe from heauen? Or who letteth you to go on in the religion receyued of your forefathers? Since all these be things cleare and out of question, it becommeth you to be quiet, and to doe nothing vpon a heade, and without aduise. But the Towneclarke coulde not be ignoraunt that Paule by his doctrine impugned the worship of Diana. But of a politike wit, he dissembleth all these things, thinking this sufficient to appease them, to let them vnderstande, howe they were bzged or compelled by no publike authoritie to forsake their olde religion. And as we sayde erewhyle, thys politike man seeketh onely how to bringe downe this sedition at ones, which he sawe beganne to growe so hote: which thing he supposed to bringe to passe moze commodiously by craftie dissembling of the matter, than by open disputation, which the seditious woulde haue little regarded. Here we may not omit that he sayth the Image came downe from heauen. For hereby it appeareth it was a comon opinion among the Ephesians, that they thought Dianas Image was sent downe from heauen. For after Satan had bewitched men with his iuglings, so that they presumed to chaunge the glorie of the immortall God into the forme of Creatures, then deceyued he them euerie day with netwe fetches and deuises, for the surer establishing of his kingdome. Hereby he perswaded them, that the Image of Pallas came downe from heauen, & that through hir protection they gate the victories which they had. So was it thought that the shielde which the Romaynes vsed, as the armes and scutchion of the Emperre, in the reigne of Numa their king, came downe from heauen. Vnto the which this that the Towneclarke sayth of the Image of Diana at Ephesus, may worthily be ioyned. But it had bene tollerable, if the Deuill in times past with such sleight had deluded but the heathen onely, so that we had not seene the like among Christians also. For who knoweth not the fable of the Chappell at Lauretum, myraculously conueyed ouer the sea? Who is ignorant of the Chappelles, that God himselfe and his Angels haue dedicated. There are to be seene diuers Images of the virgin mother, which the Monkes most impudently affirme Luke painted, where as the hystories declare he was a Whistion, and no Painter. Wherevnto are to be referred whatsoeuer myracles are tolde of Images in Monkes bookes, whereof they say, some remoued out of their place, some coulde not be remoued, some wepte, some prophecied, and other some had some notable properties, or other. By the which maye plainely be gathered, what a ranke crop of errors bleth to spring of Images, where they are once receyued and worshipped, so that it was not without a cause that Lactantius sayde: there could be no religion wheresoeuer any Image was. Which also is the chiefe cause, that all the Scripture is so diligent and earnest in oppugning them: so that it is wonderfull, how it cometh to passe, that so many are founde to defende them, seeing there are so many vnhappye Presidents of superstition, euerywhere in euery mannes eyes. This being premised, whereby he thought their mowdie mindes were

some-

some what asswaged, he plainly rebuketh them and accuseth them of great rashnesse, in that he apprehended and layde handes on Caius and Aristarchus, being straungers and knowing no cause why, saying: ye haue brought these men hyther, which are neyther robbers of Churches, nor yet despyfers of your Goddesse. So perhaps he might truly saye of them, bicause they tooke not vpon them to teach. But of Paule he shoulde not haue sayde true, who earnestly innayed against the worship and ydolatrie done to Diana, as may easily be gathered by that he did at Athens. And it is credible he would not haue suffred this defence of the Towneclarke, if he had bene present. For he being enflamed with the zeale of God, thought any thing intollerable, that made against the glozy and honoz of God. In the meane whyle, the Towne darkes wordes declare, what faultes for the most part are laide to the Ministers charge, namely, Sacriledge and blasphemie against God and the Saintes. These things we heare commonly in our dayes, neyther are we decked with any other names or tytles at their handes that are the professed enemies of the Gospell. But if a man woulde thzonghly weygh the matter, they are both false. For they be Church robbers, which eyther by stelth conuey away the goodes dedicated to God, and to his Church, or else violently inuade them, and conuert them to prophane bles. But who doth this moze impudently than Popes, Bishoppes, Monkes, Priestes, and the other of this marke. For to say nothing howe they prouide for their kinsfolke commonly of the Church goodes, let vs consider their families, and it shall appere that the greatest part of the Church goodes is spent vpon Harlottes, Dyce, Horses, Houndes, and a lubberlyke sort of seruantes, yea, they disdain vs, for no cause so much, as for that we laboz by preaching of the gospell, to restore the goodes, to Christ and his Church againe. For we defend not them which vnder a colour of the Gospell, prouide and satisfie their auarice of the Church goodes. Againe, they are blasphemous against God and the Saintes, which abuse the name of God, and robbe the Saintes of their due honoz. It is as manifest as can be, that they doe both these rather than we. For they abuse the worde of God, and the name of Christ, to establishe their ydolatrie and tyrannie. They giue vnto Creatures the honour due vnto God. They accuse the faith and doctrine of the Saintes, of heresie, and vse both fyre and sword against their booke, and them that follow them. And in the meane season go about to defame vs of sacriledge, and of blasphemie. But oh the iniquitie of our times. Among the Ephesians was founde an Heathen to defende the innocent. And now a dayes amongst the professors of Christ are scarce anye that will testifie the innocencie of Christs Ministers. Let vs marke also howe the Towneclarke sayeth these men are no Church robbers nor blasphemers, for surely he woulde haue iudged them worthy of punishment, if they had bene such. For although the Gentyles sometime greatlye erred in the faith and in religion, yet the lawe of nature was of great force amongst them which declared, that robbers of Churches and blasphemers ought to be punished. But now a dayes all things are so farre out of frame, that the faythfull defenders of the Gospell are in moze daunger, than those which pollute the Church with manifest sacriledge and blasphemie.

But let vs consider the later part of this Oration, where he prescribeth a maner and fourme to be followed, as well in priuate matters, as publike,

The Ministers of the Gospell are neyther Church robbers nor blasphemers.

The best form of common weale.

publike, saying: But if Demetrius and the Craftes men with him haue anye matter agaynst any man, the lawe is open, and there are Rulers, let them accuse one another. Thus he accuseth them all of iniustice, in that they make a publike case of a priuate, and belonging vnto a fewe persons, and endaunger themselues for another mannes cause. Then adding there vnto a seconde point, he sayth: But if you go about any other thing, it shall be determined in a lawfull Congregation. By the which wordes he teacheth them that a publike matter shoulde not in such sort be taken in hande, and layeth the daunger before their eyes that they stode in to the Romaines, for this sedition that they had made, who had a care principally that the people vnder their gouernance, shoulde liue peaceably and in quiet. This place declareth how the Romaines gouerned their common weale, while they obserued equity and iustice. They had enerywhere abrode certaine Licetenants and Magistrates, which in all places kept Courtes and lawe dayes, and suffred no man to be hurt or harmed, whose cause had not fyrst bene hearde, and he lawfully conuicted. And publike affayres were ordered in publike assemblies, and lawfull counceils without any seditious tumultes. God himselfe allowed this order of gouernement, when he appoynted Judges for his people, whome he commaunded to heare all causes diligently, and to giue true iudgement. He would haue no man to be a Judge in his owne cause. Let this order be obserued among Christians, for whome it is a shame, to be overcome of Heathens. Chiefly let them keepe them from sedition, which both impaireth the authoritie of the Magistrates, and subuerteth the state of the common weale.

Rebellions
are easily
suppressed.

But the effect of this Oration doth Luke set out, when he writeth that the assembly which a little before was in a hurly burly, was dismissed verie quietly. For as the common sort are easily brought to an vprore, so are they as easily pacified againe, if a manne deale with them by reason and counsell, rather than by force and violence. And herein appeareth the prouident care of God, wherewith he deliuereth and defendeth his children. For as the same God doth accustomably rayse the waues of the sea with sodaine blastes of winde, and layeth the same sodenlye againe, even so tryeth he his children with dreadfull stormes of daungers, and when he seeth good knoweth howe to still them againe without any daunger at all. Wherefore trusting to the goodnesse and power of him, let vs keepe our standing with stoute courage, assuring our selues to haue the vpper hande, agaynst all the attemptes of the wicked, throzwe Christ Iesus our
 Lozde and reuenger most faithfull and inuincible: to
 whome be prayse, honour, glozpe, and
 power, for euer.
 Amen.

The xx. Chapter vpon the *Actes of the Apostles.*

The Cxxxj. Homelie.

After that the rage was ceassed, Paule called the Disciples vnto him, and toke his leaue of them, and departed for to go into Macedonia: And when he had gone ouer those parties, and had giuen them a long exhortation, he came into Greece, and there abode three monethes. And when the Iewes layde wayte for him, as he was about to sayle into Syria, he purposed to returne through Macedonia. There accompanied him into Asia, Sopater of Berrhoea, and of Thessalonias Aristarchus and Secundus, and Caius and Timotheus of Derba: and out of Asia Tychichus and Trophimus. These went before, and tarried vs at Troas. And we sayled away from Philippi after the dayes of sweete bread, and came vnto them to Troas, in fīue dayes, where we abode seauen dayes.



Because oure Saviour Iesus Chryst called Paule his chosen vessel, or instrument, therfore it is not without a cause that Luke repeateth so diligently the things that Paule dyd. For so the truth of the testimonie that Chryst bare of him, is proued, & a general ensample is set out for al men to follow, which wil be taken for chosen vessels of God. Moreover, the Evangelist so proceedeth in the rehearsal of Pauls matters, that sometime he declareth the whole Hystories with the

circumstances thereof, such as in euery part of them contayne many things that serue for our instruction, as we sawe came to passe at Philippi, Corinthe, Athens, and lately at Ephesus. Sometime he comprehendeth many things in one, and in fewe words compriseth long and perillous voiaiges, which were scarce finished in many months, that it might the more evidently appeare what diligence Paule vsed in his office, what trustinesse, and what incredible paynes he tooke, and of what courage he was in daungerous enterprises. Both these things he obserueth in this Chapter. For first he briefly toucheth his iorney into Macedonia and Achaia, the entente whereof was declared befoze. Next vnto that, he sheweth certayn peculiar things, as the myracle wrought at Troas, where Eutychus was rayled agayne, and the Synode of Ministers gathered together at Miletum. We at this present will consider Pauls iorney,

The Argument of the
xx. Chapter.

When, and
in what
wise Paule
departed fro
the Ephesi-
ans.

John. 10.

Ephesi. 1.

2. Cor. 11.

Paule visi-
teth Mace-
donia and
Grace.

1. Corin. 11.

Paule exhor-
teth the cen-
gregatio to
perseuerance

the reporte whereof is so ordered, that both that that Paule dyd, and o-
thers also is rehearsed.

And in this iourney fell oute three things chiefly to be considered in
Paule. Firste is declared howe he departed from the Ephesians. After
the rage was ceassed (sayth he) he called the Disciples vnto him, and tooke
his leaue of them and departed. Then he forsooke not the Church, be-
fore all the busynesse was doone, and that he sawe the Disciples out of
daunger. Paule therefore is a good Shepheard, and no hyzeling, which
seeth the Wolfe come, and flyeth away, and prouideth for hym selfe.
And then nother he departeth not away secretly, but calleth the Con-
gregation together, and byddeth them farewell, giuing them admo-
nition of all things needefull for them to knowe and obserue. As this
was the argument of a mynde not culpable nor gyltie in it selfe, so
it sheweth a signification of a faythfull care, that he woulde haue of
them, euen when he was absente. In so muche that afterwarde when
he wrote vnto them, hee sayth that hee made continuall mention of
them in hys prayers. And in an other place he wyrteth, that the
care of all Churches lyeth on hys shoulders. Let all those followe
thys example, vnto whose charge either the Church or Common
weale is committed, least they seeme to proude for their owne selues,
when publike perilles bee at hande, or else to haue little or no regarde
of them, whereof they shall giue a straight accounte another day vnto
the Lorde. Nexte he sheweth whether he wente, into Macedonia,
and from thence into Greece, in which places he spent three monethes,
bestowing all that tyme in visiting and confirming the Churches.
Thus wee reade he dyd also other wheres, in the. xiii. and. xv. Chap-
ters. Whereby wee gather, that it was the common vse of the Apo-
stles, not onely to plant Churches, but afterwarde to goe visite them,
and confirme them in the fayth, and to cense them of errours, if per-
haps any had crepte in, whyle they were absent. Wee learne by their
example, that they whiche haue their Churches and common weales
once well ordered, ought not to be carelesse, but to take good heede (as
Chryst warneth vs) that whyle wee are sleeping, Sathan some not
bugracious cockle among them. He bleseth chiefly to lye in wayte for
the Church, to pul them from Chryst, who ought to cleaue vnto him like
a faythfull wife. He likewise diuersly assauleth many wayes good and
wholsome lawes, bycause he thinketh his kingdome woulde easily bee
established, if they were ouerturned. And his attemptes be not alwayes
in vayne, bycause there are fewe that followe Pauls fayth, industrie,
sufferaunce, and diligence. Thirdly, is playnely declared what Paule
dyd in these Churches. He gaue them a long exhortation, verily to
continue in the fayth, without the which none can bee saued. Often
exhortations are needefull, both for vs which bee ready of nature to
fall, and also bycause of the Deuill, whiche alway walketh by and
downe lyke a roaring Lyon, and seeketh whom he may deuoure. Ther-
fore their iudgemente is not to bee admitted, whiche thinke thys
is but a superfluous care and labour. In the meane season wee are
admonished, that Churches haue nothyng of more pryce, than the
worde of God, out of the whiche dayly instructions, exhortations, and

corrections ought to bee taken. Wherein the Apostles were so diligent, that they easily neglected all other things in comparison hereof, as wee mighte perceyue in the sixte Chapter. Therefore they bee farre vnylike the Apostles, that neglect the Office and Ministerie of the worde and teaching, and are occupied in wearishe Ceremonies, or else in administration of earthly iurisdiccions.

But let vs retorne vnto Paule, and see what he suffered in thys boyage. The Jewes layde wayte for hym as hee was sayling into Syria, who had thoughte to haue made hym oute of the way. But Paule prudently disappoynteth them, altering his purpose, and going by lande into Macedonia and Syria. This place teacheth vs what rewarde Ministers of the Truth haue in this worlde. Certes the worst that can bee, whyle men seeke to destroy them, whiche of all other men labour moste to byng them to saluation. For howe carefull Paule was for the Jewes, bothe his continuall labours and trauell, and also hys Epistles testifie, specially, that whiche he wyrteth to the Romanes in the ninth and tenth Chapiters. And yet had he no greater ennimies than they. The same wee haue other wheares declared, that Moyse, and the Prophetes, and Iesus Chryste the Sonne of God suffered. Let no man therefore nowe a dayes bee offended, when the lyke things fall out, seeing such is the nature of the worlde, that they thinke their felicitie standeth in the destruction of the godly. In whiche their iudgemente yet they are moste myserable decciued. For thus they bereeue them selues of the wholesome succour of prayers, whiche the godly vse to make euen for their ennimies. But what shall wee doo (wylte thou say) if wee shoulde come into the lyke hazarde? Followe Paule, in whome thou shalte note principally two thinges. For he both constantly wente forwarde in his vocation, and lykewise prudently auoyded the daunger thereof arising. Thus must we aboue all things remember our vocation, that wee bee not plucked therefro, through any ingratitude of the worlde. For why shoulde wee forget our calling, and followe those, whose wicked vsage wee are wonte to deteste? Yet let vs be circumspect, and as Chryste counsayleth vs, beware of men, least wee bee layde to tempte God, by putting our selues rashly and vnadvisedly in daunger.

Nowe what doth God in the meane season? Leaueth hee his seruant in daunger? No. But whyle the Jewes his kinsmen and false brethren, (as hee complayneth him. ij. Cozinth. xi.) lay in wayte for him, God ioyneth vnto him faythfull fellowes and companions, in his trauelles and daungers, which helpe him in this perrill, both with counsell and otherwise. Here are reckened seauen notable men, of diuers congregations, of whome Paule many tymes maketh mention in his Epistles, beside Luke the wyrtter of this present Hystorie, which made eyghte. And some of these go before, to see and marke whether there were any lying in wayte, and to prouide Paule of lodging, or other some kepte closely vnto him, to comforte him with their compaignie, and to prouide him of necessaries. And heere the truth and goodnesse of God is diligently to bee considered, whiche vseth to defende his seruantes that are in daunger, and to prouide them of faythfull

The Jewes
lay wayte
for Paule.

Math. 10.

Paules gard
or garriso.

companions, that labour and trauell for the glory of hys name. Thus vnto Ioseph, that required to haue the buriall of Chrystes body, is ioyned Nicodemus, to beare parte of the charges, labour and perill in the same. But now we a dayes, wee complayne of the slothe and cowardelynesse of others, saying, wee are not able alone to beare the weyght of Chrystes quarell, being as cowardely and slothefull as other. But if wee woulde doo our durtie, wee shoulde see God would quickly touche the heartes of others also. Wee haue besides in Paules Companions a notable example of loue and thankfulness, what a daungerous and laborous thing it was to followe Paule by Sea and by lande, hauing euerywhere so many enimies; euery man may easily coniecture. But for all this, they which worthely esteemed the gyft of fayth, that they had gotten by Paules teaching, could not be separated from him. And these men want not their rewarde even vpon the earth, bycause God hath registred their names in eternal memorie, and their soules no doubt do now reioyce wyth Chryste in heauen, bycause they accompanied his minister so curteously on earth. The Apostle setteth foorth this promptnesse and readynesse of minde in the Galatians also, who he sayth woulde not haue spared their eyes, if hee had needed them. But O the filthy vnthankfulness of our dayes, which is runne so farre, that they whiche bragge of the fayth, rent and deface with filthy slaunders the names of them, by whose ministerie they firste learned the fayth. Yet let Gods promise and mercy comforte vs, which will neuer leaue them destitute of his helpe, whom he hath chosen to the inheritaunce of heauenly life in his sonne Iesus Chryste; to whome bee prayse, honour, power and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.Cxxxij.Homelie.

AND vppon one of the Saboth dayes, when the Disciples came togyther for to breake breade, Paule preached vnto them, ready to departe on the morrowe, and continued the preaching vnto Midnyght. And there were many lightes in the Chamber, where wee were gathered togyther: and there sate in a wyndowe a certayne young man named Eutychus, beeyng fallen into a deepe sleepe. And as Paule was preachyng, he was the more ouercome wyth sleepe, and fell downe from the thirde losfe, and was taken vppe deade. But when Paule wente downe, hee fell on hym, and embraced hym, and sayde: Make nothyng adoo, for hys lyfe is in hym. So when hee was come vppe agayne, and hadde broken the breade and eaten, and talked a long whyle (euen vntyll

the mornyng) at the laste hee departed. And they broughte the young man alyue, and were not a lytle comforted. And we went afore to Shippe, and loosed vnto Asson, there to receyue Paule. For so had he appoynted, and woulde him selfe goe on foote. When we were come together at Asson, wee tooke him in, and came to Mitylene. And we sailed thence, and came the next day ouer against Chios. And the next day we arrived at Samos, and taryed at Trogyllion. The next day following we came to Miletum. For Paule had determined to saile ouer by Ephesus, bicause he would not spend the time in Asia, for he hasted (if it were possible) to keepe at Ierusalem the feaste of Pentecoste.



After that the Apostle Paule had accomplished at Ephesus all things that appertained to the establishment of the same Church, then went hee on with the voyage that hee had before purposed to make, in the which hee visited the Churches of Macedonia and Greece, and confirmed them in the true faith. Wee haue seene there notable argumentes of the Apostles faith and diligence, when as Paule lette for no labour or daunger, eyther to gette Churches, or to preserue those that were gotten. At length hee came to Troas, where fell oute certaine peculiere things, in the describing whereof, Luke is very diligent. And first hee setteth out an ensample of Ecclesiasticall assemblie, and next a myracle that God would haue wrought in that place, bothe for the commendation and setting forth of Pauls Ministerie, and for diuers causes else.

Hee describeth this Church assemblie with all the circumstances thereof very diligently. And beginning with the time, he saythe they came together on a Sabbath day, which day as yet, was muche celebrated, bicause of the auncient custome. Afterward, when the Church began more and more to increase, the next day following, the Sabbath was appoynted for Goddes seruice, and in remembraunce of Christes resurrection, it was called the Lordes day. By this place wee learne, that suche dayes as God hath appoynted for seruice or religion, ought not to bee neglected of Christian menne. For they are not onely needefull bicause of outwarde wooshippe, but also inward, which cheefely consisteth in the studie of Goddes woorde, and in the diligent meditation of his benefites, the bodie and minde for the time beeing cleane separated from all prophane matters, whiche thing was the cause that GOD commaunded the breakers of the Sabbath to bee punished with deathe. And the breaking of the Sabbath is accounted of the Prophetes, amongst the mosse haynous sinnes

An exāple
of a church
assembly.

Nehem. 13

Holy places.

Math. 5

The breaking of bread.

and causes of the Captiuitie of Babylon: so that it was not without a cause that Nehemias thought it is due tie, to see that day kept so holy, when the people returned from their captiuitie. Whereunto appertaineth also the example of Christ, who as he oftentimes vpon the sabboth day went into the Synagoges; so he diuers times disputed diligently of the right vsing of that day, to deliuer it both from superstition and also from contempt. Then he sheweth also the place, where this companie or assemblie mette. This was a loft or chambr in the private house of some one of the faithfull, who appointed it for the Church or Congregation, because the Christians for good cause abhorred the Temples of the Idolaters, and they had no publike place permitted them, by reason the Romane Presidents bare rule in euery place, which either were no fauourers of Christian religion, or else were open enemies thereof. He sayth there were diuers candles lighted in the chamber, to putte away the darkenesse of the nighte, and for auoyding the suspition of dishonestie. Therefore it is a peeuishe erroure of them, which of a foolish imitation make that a seruice of God, which in times past serued for necessitie, and thinke that God which is the light euerlasting, is woozhipped with candles of tallowe or ware, and for the defense of their inuention, vse both this place, and the example of Moses lawe. For heere is plainly expessed the night time, when it is needefull for candles to bee lighted. And for the same cause afterwarde, the Christians bled candles in their assemblies, because they coulde not meete togyther, but in the morning before day, by reason of the lying awayte of their enemies, as appeareth by the Epistles of Plinius Secundus, and may be gathered oute of the Church wyrters. The which cause being taken awaye, it is but foolishnesse, to helpe the day lighte with artificiall lightes. It is euident there was a farre other meaning of the Candlesticke in Leuiticus. For as all the ceremonies of that Priesthoope, were figures of things that Christ shoulde performe, and were ordained only till the time of correction, so the candlesticke also was a figure of Christ, which is the true and eternall lighte of the worlde, and which by the ministerie of the Gospell lighteth his Church, for the which cause the Apostles, and they which are theyr true and lawfull successours, are called the light of the world. In the meane season wee learne, that it is necessary to haue certaine places, for the outwarde woozhipping, and for the Congregation to meete in, suche as in the olde Testament, the Temple and Synagoges were, and suche as after the Apostles times, when the Church began somewhat to be at rest, the Oratozies that were builded, were. In these places all things must serue for honestie and for religion, and nothing must be suffered, that declareth any superstition, too much riotous cost, or prophane contempt. Thirdly, he sheweth the cause of this meeting, which was (as he writeth) to breake bread. He meaneth the holy supper of the Lorde, which in times past they called breaking of bread, because the bread was broken therein according to Christs institution, bothe for that wee shoulde confesse oure selve sinners, and guiltie of the death of Christ, and also for that we shoulde vnderstand, that the merite of Christ, was dealt among vs, and pertained indiffe-

rently

rently vnto all beleuers. It is very worthy to be obserued, howe our forefathers in the time of the Apostles, vsed to order and celebrate this Supper. Firste of all Paule maketh a sermon, as the things following declare, because the supper was ended after Eutychus was raised. Therefore when the sermon was ended, they went to the supper, and that in the open sight of the assemblie, in a place and time appoynted for Gods seruice, and after none other fashion, than was appointed by Christ. For, that they obserued the same manner and rites in all pointes, both the woorde breaking of bread, and the example of Paule declarerth, which reuoked the Corinthians so carefully, to that forme of supper that Christ ordained. Thus is it euident that Christ also vsed to teach befoze the supper, and did ordaine nothing tending more to superstition than religion. Therefore, let the Papistes regarde with what argumentes or examples they defend their Masse, wherein there is no word of God taught, all things are don in a strange tong; the people haue nothing to muse or think on, but wearish and preemish gestures, and stage playes: to say nothing in the meane while of the impairing of Chrystes sacrifice, of the derogation of his merit, and how the faith & religion of Christ is ouerthrowne, even vnto the foundations. But so ought they to be seduced which had leauer folow the imagination of their own braine, than the institution of Christ.

Moreover, the manner that Paule vsed in his preaching, pertaineth to the description of the assembly of the Church, which we may coniecture by the time. For first it is sayde, that he prolonged his sermon vntill midnight, then when supper was done, howe he discoursed till breake of the day, of things appertaining to religion. Therefore his teaching was not for a fashion sake, and as though he cared not whether he did it or not, but with great zeale and diligence. For where he had a righte iudgement of his ministerie, and knewe he was sent of God to be an Embassador for Christ (as he testifieth in this later Epistle to the Corinthians the fiftthe Chapter) he therefore was very fetuent in zeale, because he would not be counted an vntrustie Ambassadoute vnto God. Also it is euident that the hearers had as good a iudgement of Paules ministerie, as of his doctrine, because they did bouchsafe to heare him so patiently all the night long. By this example is the sloth of our age reproued, and the great contempt of Goddes woorde. For in the Ministers appeare not those tokens of the Apostolike zeale, because many of them are occupied more in vaine studies, than in the meditation of Gods woorde, and thinke they haue well discharged their duetie, if they make one or two cold collatiōs in a weke. Again, the people that can not stand long to heare, thinke every minute of an houre that they spend in hearing of Goddes woorde, an whole day, whereas in trifeling studies, yea in filthie and dishonest, they thinke no time, no cost, no laboure too muche. Hereof it commeth to passe, that the authoritie of the Ministerie is despised, and the word of God kept from a great many. See what God sayth of both these euils in Malach. 2. cap. and Amos. 7.

Now followeth the myracle by the which God thought good, both to approue the ministerie of Paule, and also to stirre men bp to the diligente consydering of Paules doctrine. In the fyrst part whereof, Eutychus is to be consydered, vpon whome the myracle was shewed. As Paule was

preaching,

The manner of the Apostles preaching.

Eutich^o falleth out of a windowe, & dieth.

preaching he sat in a window, either because the number of hearers were so many, that there was no seate for him self where, or else because he would haue so shaken of slepe, which he perceiued came creeping on him. Howbeit, at length being overcome of slepe, he fel downe, and died of the fall. But if this thing came vnto him whose sleepinesse might many wayes be excused, what thinke we may come to passe and fall on those, which heare the worde of God in contemptuous wise, and while they seeme to sit to heare, either of purpose settle them selues to slepe, or else being overcome with surfet and quaffing, are enforced to slepe. As these men are negligent of their saluation, so they much regard not the maiesty of God. Wherefore it can not be, but the preaching of the gospel must tend to their destruction, which otherwise is the administratrix of saluation vnto the diligent hearers and them that beleue it. Also we are taught by this place, that God permitte ths sometimes to be tempted with doleful and heauie troubles. For, what thing I pray you, could make Pauls doctrine to be suspected, seeing his industrie was disturbed with so dolorous a trouble. Yea what enuie should the Apostle haue had, who should haue bene iudged the cause, by reason of his long sermon. But the Lord faileth not those that are his, but by a notable myracle sheweth by and by, that the gospel bringeth saluation, so that whatsoeuer seemeth to make most against it, serueth to the confirmation therof: Let vs learne therefore to iudge rightly of all aduersities that falleth oute, God sendeth them to feare vs, and to haue occasion to exercise his power. Let vs therefore patiently suffer al things, and not doubt of the knowne truth. For so it shall come to passe, that the ende of those things shall be ioyfull, whose beginning seemed to vs to be altogether vnprosperous and dolefull, as shall be most euidently declared in the second parte of this miracle, to omit other examples which might be brought.

The miraculous raising againe of Eutichus.

After this Luke describeth the myraculous raising vp of Eutychus againe, wherein all thing that Paule did, must be considered in order. First as lone as he knewe of the matter, he gate him downe to helpe him, and alleageth for his excuse neither the dishonouring of the Sabothe, nor of the supper. He is not therefore superstitious, but remembring the doctrine of Christe, vnderstandeth that the Sabothe was ordained for man, and that all externe ceremonies must giue place vnto charitie. Therefore they are foolishly superstitious, yea, wicked, which in like necessitie, saye it is vnlawfull to breake the traditions of men, as they which are so bounde vnto Monike rules, that they may not helpe their kinsfolke being in daunger or distresse, and thinke no cause sufficient, to interrupt the sacrifice of the Masse. Then falling vpon the yong man he embraceth him, not because he thought he could bring him to life againe, by the touching of his body, but for that he knew this must be done by the power of Christ, whose ambassadour he was. Wherefore this gesture of Paule containeth the mysterie of our saluation. For by the proud fall of Adam, sinne & death by meane thereof fell on vs all. But in Christ, life and saluation is offered vs, partakers wherof shall all such bee, which being drawne by the doctrine of the Apostles, as it were by the armes, doe come into the fellowship of Christ, through fayth. Furthermore, he friendly comforteth them that are in feare, saying: Make nothing adoe, or be you not troubled. For

he

he was not without cause afraide, (as we saide before) least the weake in faith would hereby much haue swarued. Wherefore he by and by addeth: His life is yet in him. By the which wordes, he denieth not the myracle, but pronounceth modestly of him selfe, bicause he would not seeme to attribute any thing to him selfe, and for that he would giue occasion to no man to thinke of him, aboue that becommed them. Then returning forthwith into the chambze againe, he maketh an ende of the distributing the Supper, and begimeth a newe sermon which he continueth vntill morning, and then by sunne vp, taketh his iourney. Herein is Paules wonderfull diligence to be commended, which hauing wrought such a myracle, goeth yet on in his vocation, and thinketh he hath not yet fulfilled all his duetie, as some sluggardes vse, but yet great baunters of their owne labors and trauailes, let vs imitate Paules industrie, and thinke that we owe God the more seruice, the greater tokens we perceiue in oure selues of his power and grace. Luke ioyneth vnto this myracle a notable frute of this endeuor and studie. For they brought the yong man aliue. For the woorkes of God are perfecte, and the Apostles beguiled no man with myracles of legerdemaine, as Juglers vse to do. Then the beleeuers were not a little comforted, not only bicause the yong man was restored to life againe, but for that they sawe set before their eyes such an euident testimonie of Gods grace and fauor. By this place are declared vnto vs the frutes that vse alwayes to followe the studie of the gospell. For it bothe bringeth life vnto vs, bicause the gospell is the power of saluation, vnto all that beleue in it, and it recreateth the minde with sounde ioy, while it teacheth vs that the Father is reconciled vnto vs through the Sonne. Which ioye as it is full and perfite: so no man is able to take it from vs.

Iohn 16

Paules viages wer full of trauailes and danger.

Furthermore, the Euangelist returneth to the description of Paules boiage, reherfing in order both the Cities, and places, which either they sailed by, or else made abode in for any time. The situation and standing of which places if any man desire to knowe, he may peruse the tables and booke of the Geographers. From Troas vnto Asson, Paule went on fote, sending his companions afoze by Barche. For he ment either to visite the congregation as he went, or to auoide the annoyance of sailing by Sea. Where yet his humanitie is to be praised, that he would ease his felowes of trauaile, and not abuse their industrie and good will. At length, passing by Ephesus, they come vnto Milerum, or Malta, wher he called the ministers of Asia vnto a Synode. It is wyrtten that he made great haste, bicause he purposed to be at Ierusalē at Pentecost, not after the vsage of the Iewes, but bicause of the concurre of people, which he thought should heare him preach, to their great auaille and profite. This place is very notable, containing Paules trauailes and ieopardies. By the which we learne, howe difficult a matter it is, duely and truely to serue God, who can abide none worse than idle and sluggish worshippinges. Thus we read Abraham, Isaac, Iacob, Moses, the Prophets, and after them Christ were troubled and embzued with continuall laboures and perilles. Therefore let vs also prepare our selues to labours and daungers, that we be not troubled when they sodainly fall on vs. This place teacheth vs also, of what authoritie the gospell ought to be with vs, which we know was set forth with such paines and trauaile, and with the effusion of so much blood. For to this

Marke. 1
Luke. 4

ende laboured all the Apostles, and the Prophetes before them, and the very sonne of God, who testifieth that he came also to preach and set forth the gospel. Therfore their slouthfulnesse is execrable, which so easely let such a treasure be taken from them. Their religion likewise is preposterous, which alwayes hauing in their mouthes the Saintes, and honouring of the Saintes, doe in the meane season lothe the doctrine of the gospel, for whole sake, tyll the Saintes suffered suche paines, abode so many daungers, and at length shed their blood. Let vs therfore haue a true opinion of this treasure (O brethren) by the which only, saluation is offered vs, the authoꝝ wherof is Iesus Christ: to whom be praise, honoure, power and glory for euer. Amen.

The. Cxxxiiij. Homelie.

And from Miletus he sent Messengers to Ephesus, & called the elders of the congregation, which when they were come to him, he saide vnto them: ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I haue bene with you at all seasons, seruing the Lorde with all humblenesse of minde, and with many teares and temptations, which came to passe vnto me by the laying await of the Iewes, bicause I would kepe backe nothing that was profitable vnto you, but to shew you and teach you openly, thorowout euery house, witnessing both to the Iewes and also to the Greekes, that the repentance that is toward God, and that faith which is toward our Lord Iesus.

The holy Ghost by the holy wyrtier Luke, moste diligently reporteth the Actes of the Apostles of Iesus Christ, partly for that all ministers might haue a presidēt to folloꝝ, and partly that all men might vnderstande of what authozitie the gospel ought to be with vs, which they haue set forth with such great paines and trauailes. And heereunto is this presente Acte of Paule the Apostle to be referred. Who although he made great haste to Ierusalem, and ment to spend no time in Asia, yet he intermitted none of the things, which belonged to the vtilitie of the Churches of Asia. For he calleth before him at Miletus, the Elders oꝝ Ministers of Ephesus, and the Cities adioyning, and in a general Coucel, concludeth with them, things of much waight and importance. By which example, as the faith and industrie of Paule appeareth: so we are taught, that the conuocation of ministers with the common consent of all parties, is very necessary for the determination of Ecclesiasticall matters. This maketh for the maintenance of discipline in the Church, to kepe vnder the ambition of prelates, to conserue an vnitie in true doctrine, and to beat downe heresies, which many times vse to creepe in, if ministers doe not faithfully sette to their helpes. Heere therfore the error of those that would mingle the workes of the lawe with the faith in Christ, was abolished by a general conuocation, and the truth defended by authozitie of the same. Heereunto that moste godly and prudent Prince Constantine the great, had a respecte, when he bled to cal the Synodes of Bishops together, against the which Licinus the publike ennemie of Christian religion did greatly resiste, who

The coun-
cel of Mi-
letus.

by publike Proclamation, as Eusebius wyrteth, forbade the pastoures of the churches to meete or assemble together. For the craftie & subtile fore perceived, that by consent and vnitie of the Ministers, the Church, and the confession of a true faith, were cheefely established, and that this consent was cheefely maintained by aucthoritie of Counsels. And Antichrist as craftily hath pulled vnto him selfe all aucthoritie of Counsels, to the end that he would not haue his tyrannie kepte vnder, by Counsels lawfully assembled. Also in the Ministers of Asia, is declared a singuler example of modestie, who although they were more in number, yet refused not the appointment of Paule being but one, who had preached Christ first in those quarters, and whome by many arguments they had proued, was a chosen instrument of Christ. For although the dignitie of all Ministers in the Church is alike, and none ought to chalenge power or aucthoritie ouer other, yet an order is necessary in the Church, which can neuer be kept and maintained, except Ministers will obserue modestie and humilitie among themselves. And Paule did not therefore call these Pastors of Asia before him, bicause he chalenged any priuate aucthoritie or iurisdiction ouer them, but bicause it was for the behoofe & auaille of the whole church, that they should haue warning of matters of importance, wherein, he thought not to be behinde for his parte, bicause (as he confesseth other wheres) he knewe him selfe to be a debter bothe to the Jewes and to the Gentiles.

Furthermore let vs see Pauls oration containing in it the causes of the calling of this Synode. For it hath in it a vehement and pithie exhortation, that for as muche as they should see him no more, they would followe his example, and diligently kepe the doctrine he had taught them, that they would carefully watche for the sauegarde of the Church, and stoutly resist those heretickes, whereof a numbze, very noysome and hurtfull would follow. He exhorteth them the rather by his example, and vrgeth them the more earnestly, bicause that as he was in his owne conscience not culpable, so he communed with them, to whome his credite and diligence was well knowne. And in the beginning he comprehendeth bzeifely bothe the example of his owne life, and the summe of his doctrine.

Concerning his liuing, he sayth thus: Yee knowe from the first day I came into Asia, after what manner I haue beene with you, at all seasons, seruing the Lorde with all humbleness of minde, and with many teares and temptations which happened to mee, by the laying await of the Iewes. As he calleth them to witnesse, so he alleageth all the time of his conuersation among them, least any mighte thinke hee had counterfained godlinesse for a small season, as a great many ble to doe, who when they haue craftily crope and gotte within men through their pretence of bettuoussnesse, at lengthe moste shamefully betray their cloked naughtinesse. For the wicked can not long counterfet godlinesse. But bicause Paule had wholly addicted himselfe vnto Christ and to his religion, therefore he alwayes obserued one tenor of conuersation, and one like studie and trauaile in the Ministerie.

Of this studie and trauaile is it to be vnderstanded, where it is sayde, he serued the Lorde, wherein he maketh mention of three things specially, humbleness of minde, teares, which the earnest desire of all

In his first booke of the life of Constantine.

Roma. 1.

The argument of Pauls oration made in the counsell.

Paul rezoeth an accompt of his liuing

minnes saluation caused him to shed, and greuous temptations which yet could neuer plucke him from doing his office and duetie. By these lette the Ministers of Churches learne what manner of men they ought to be in the Ministerie of the Church.

Humilitie.

2. Thessa. 2

Desire of al
mens sal-
nation.

Luke. 19

Exod. 32

1. Sam. 15. 16

Iohn. 10

Constancy.

And firste lette them laboure for Humilitie, that they ascribe not to them selues impudently any Diuinitie or Godheade (which is the propertie of Antichriste) or contempne any persone in comparison of themselves, and so arrogantly seeke rule and Lordshippe ouer their fellowe Ministers, which thing Peter warneth them of, in his first Epistle and fiftthe Chapter. For it becommeth them that will bee Christes Ministers, to followe Christes ensample, who as hee derogateth nothing from the glory of his Father, so hee neuer disdained any persone, in so muche that hee liued very familiarly with Publicanes and sinners, and did witse to washe hys Disciples feete, so leauing it to them as an Example of Humilitie, teaching them that they shoulde refuse no kinde of duetifulnesse one towarde another. Unto Humilitie must bee ioyned a desire to profite all menne, whiche Ministers muste seeke with all diligence, yea euen with teares. For hereof we haue an ensample in Christe, who as Mathewe wyrteth in the ninthe Chapter was moued euen from the bottome of the heart when he sawe the Jewes go astray like sheepe lacking a Shepheard. And in an other place we read he wepte when he behelde Jerusalem, that unkinde and bloudy Citie, knowing that for their greuous wickednesse, and irrepentant mindes, they shoulde shortly come to destruction.

The like affection of Charitie we see in Moses, who chose rather to bee whipped oute of the Booke of life, than to see the destruction of his Countrymen. Samuel the Prophete had the like in him also, who hearing that God hadde forsaken Saule, tooke suche a care of heart therefore, that he ceased not mourning till God reprehended him for it. 1. Sam. 15. and 16. And that Paule proudly bragged not of this affection, bothe his faithfull and continuall diligence to sette forth the publike saluation pro- ueth, and also this, that for the Jewes sake which were hys mortall enemyes, hee wished to be accursed. And surely as many as well vnderstande the reason of their Ministerie, cannot wante thys affection, for where they heare that menne are borne againe by their Ministerie, they take them for theyr Children, whome they bring vnto GOD, and they vse to embrace them with a Fatherly affection, which if any man wante, doubtlesse hee abundantly declareth that hee vnderstandeth not the dignitie of hys Ministerie. But there muste bee also ioyned heereunto a thirde thing, that they fall not in the time of temptation, or being ouercomen with feare, forsake not their Churches, when persecution ariseth. For Christ saith, that this is the propertie of hirelings. Yea lette them thincke that their faith and constancie is then cheefe- ly required, when they see bothe them selues, and their sheepe most of all tempted. And if a man woulde compare those, that nowe a dayes will bee called Successours of the Apostles wyth this Example of Paule, it shall easely appeare howe little or nothyng of Pauls heart and minde is in them, bicause in pride they excede all barbarous Princes, they fill the world full of warres, they haue no pitie of the sheepe that goe

astray,

allray, but are only careful how to prouide for them and theirs, with the common losse and detriment of other men.

But lette vs retourne vnto Paule, who rendering an accompte of hys Doctrine, setteth out a perfecte patterne of the same, not onely to the Ephesians and those of Asia, but to all Ministers, for all tymes and all places. And fyrste he sayth, he didde all things among them of good purpose and intente: I kepte backe nothyng that was profitable vnto you, but shewed you it. &c. The sense is, that hee kepte from them nothyng, that was necessarie for them to knowe. The same is required of all Ministers, to teache the doctrine of saluation perfectly, and to keepe backe nothyng, for the worldes pleasure. Yea, the more the worlde rageth, the more muste the trumpe of the worde sounde, that they suffer not the truthe to bee oppressed and ouercome with the fury of the worlde. Heere is reprovued the error of them, whych thinke it good to yeelde somewhat to the enemies of truthe, that they bee not the more incensed by playnenesse of teaching: as though they became not the fiercer throughe the slothe of Ministers, whyle they thynke men feare them, and the Ministers distruste their grounde and quarell. It is heere chiefly to bee noted, that the Apostles teache all thinges fully and perfectly that concerne the saluation of man, so that there needeth no additions or patches to supply or make by their doctrine. For it is euident that Chryst concealeth nothing from them, prouing by this argument that he tooke them for his friendes, bycause he reuealed all thinges vnto them, that he receyued of his father. He promised them his spirite, to prompt them, and put them in remembraunce of all thinges, which we haue seene before they receyued. Therefore the doctrine of the Apostles is full and perfecte, whereby they taughte Iesus Chryste onely vnto the Church, as their Epistles and Sermons abundantly declare. Therefore they do great iniurie both to Chryste and his Apostles, which dare coyn newe Articles of sayth, and thruste into the Church diuers thinges expressely contrary to the doctrine of the Apostles.

Secondely, hee declareth the manner that hee obserued in teaching, whyle hee saythe he taughte bothe priuately and apertly thozoughout euery house, witnessing bothe to the Jewes and also to the Gentiles. These thinges declare the continuall trauell of the Apostle, wherewith he was so enflamed, that as he sette before all men the doctrine of saluation, so he omitted nothing, which made for the saluation of all men. Wee learne heereby what the beste trade and manner of teaching is. fyrste, all thinges muste bee declared generally and openly that belong to saluation, so that all men may vnderstande what they ought eyther to doo, or to leaue vndoone.

But bycause all men do not yelde of their owne accorde, and yet many tymes they offende of carelesnesse more than of malice, without offence of others, it behoueth also to adioyne priuate admonitions, exhortations, and reprehensions. For if it be the duetie of euery Chyistian to admonishe his neighbour, and to bring him into the way that is out of it, howe muche more oughte the Minister thus to doo, of whome Chryste one day shall require an accompte of the office committed vnto hym.

Paul giueth
an accounte
of his do-
ctrine.

He taughte
all things.

Iohn. 15.

He taughte
both priuat-
ly & apertly

But by this word witnessing, is noted an earnest and free kinde of speech, without the which all other things are but colde. It is diligently to be considered, what authoritie the Minister hath ouer the Sheepe committed to his charge, seeing that he muste teache and exhorde them, bothe openly and priuily through euery house. Where also may be gathered, howe they ought to bee taken, which will not be admonished neither publikely nor priuately of their Ministers. For why shoulde they bee iudged the Sheepe of Chryst, which presumptuously disdain the voyce of their Shepheard.

The summe
of Paules
doctrine.

Luc. 24.

Iohn. 14.

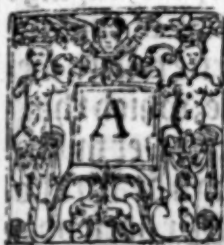
Finally he cōprehendeth the summe of his doctrine in two poynts, that is to say, in repentaunce toward God, and sayth in Iesus Chryst. These things agree with the commaundement of Chryst, which appoynted the Apostles to preach repentaunce and forgienesse of sinnes in his name. Wherby it appeareth that Paule preached a true Gospell, and also what maner of doctrine ought to be preached. And heere repentaunce hath the first place, which otherwheres we haue defined to be a conuerting or turning vnto God: which diffinition Paule alloweth, where he sayth, he taught repentaunce toward God, that is, such a thing as men turne vnto God by. Of this tooke the Apostles the beginning of their preaching, as Chryst commaunded them, bicause we haue all gone out of the way, and are of nature corrupte. And bycause wee flye the sighte of God, as Adam did, therfore must sayth in Chryst also be preached, which teacheth vs that wee are reconciled to the father through meane of his sonne, by whome wee beeing bozne agayne of the immortall seede of Gods worde, are made the children of God. Therefore their errour is very hurtfull and shamefull, whiche still bryge penaunce, but in the meane whyle neglecte saythe, without the whiche repentaunce can not stande. For howe shoulde he returne vnto God, which hath not Chryste, who onely is the way, the lighte, and the truthe, and without whom no man cometh vnto the father. But bycause we haue entreated of these matters other wheres, more at large, let these fewe suffice for this season. Let all men learne by Paules example to iudge of Doctrines, and not suffer any manner of doctrine to be thrust in among them, but suche as teacheth a true conuersion vnto God, through sayth in Iesus Chryste, to whome be prayse, honor, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The Cxxxiiij. Homelie.

AND now behold I go bounde in the spirite vnto Ierusalem, not knowing the things that shall come on me there, but that the holy Ghost witnesseth in euery Citie, saying, that bands and troubles abide me. But none of these things moue me, neither is my life deare vnto my selfe, that I might fulfill my course with joy, and the ministracion that I haue receyued of the Lorde Iesu, to testifie the Gospell of the grace of God. And now behold I am sure, that hencefoorth ye all, through whom I haue gone

preaching

preaching the kingdome of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to recorde this day, that I am pure from the bloud of all men. For I haue spared no labour, but haue shewed you all the counsaile of God.



Although Iesus Chryst the sonne of God, whyle he was in this world, alwayes loued his Disciples maruelously, yet he declared most euident tokens of his loue, a little before his going away, as those graue and wholsome admonitions that he gaue them at his laste Supper, abundantly declare. Paule following his example, was not onely carefull for the saluation of Churches, whyle he was among them, but when he departed from them: yea beeing absent, he much more manifestly declared, howe neare his harte the welfare of them all dyd sitte. This appeareth euerywhere in all his Epistles, but specially in this oration which he made in the Synode at Miletum, before the Pastours and Ministers of Asia. For where he foresawe that he shoulde neuer come agayne to the Churches of Asia, and knewe what daunger was lyke to follow, by false teachers, after he was gone, therefore he warneth them with all trustinesse and diligence possible, both of their dueties, and other things necessarie for their saluation. But chiefly, he setteth before them his owne example, to purchase the more authoritie to his admonition, whereof bycause we yesterday intreated sufficiently ynough, now we will come to the explication of this present place.

For there followeth a reason of the cause that moued him so earnestly to bzge his owne example: verily, euen for that he was vpon departure, and shoulde returne no more to them agayne. For hereof he gathered, that they ought to follow the example of their Apostle and teacher, & with all diligence to take vpon them the care of the Church, least they should lose that through their slouthe and negligence, which he had gotten with so great labours and trauell. And this is the whole summe of this place. It shall be good to consider all things in the order that they are declared, and to seeke out what mysteries lye hidden in euery worde.

First, and now beholde (sayth he) I go bounde in the spirite, vnto Ierusalem. By the which words he vnderstandeth a secrete motion of the holy Ghost, which we see was alwayes his guide in all his dooings. Vnto who, although he willingly obeyed (as the things folowing declare) yet he testifieth, that he is led bounde as it were, least he might seeme ouer lightly or rashly to tempt God, by putting himselfe in daunger without a cause. He declareth therefore, that he coulde not do otherwise, vnlesse he would obstinately wrassele with the spirite of God. This maner of Pauls speaking teacheth vs, how we shoulde regard both the secret suggestions of the holy Ghost, & also his open and expresse oracles. They muste be like bands wherby our wayward & struiuing flesh must be brought to the obedience of faith, & that willingly, least we fele the mightie hand of god to our great losse & calamitie: who bringeth the which had leser to folow the sensuality of flesh, than to obey his calling, euen perforce to that he willet. Thus we read he was angry with Moses, refusing & office that he offered

him.

The Argument of this place.

Paule by the guyding of Gods spirite goeth to Ierusalem.

Exod. 4.
Iere. 1.

Paule is cal-
led vnto
manifest
daungers.

him. Exod. 4. And vnto Ieremie doing the lyke, and alleaging his yowthe he sayde in wrothfull wyse. Saye not, I am to yong. For thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee vnto, and what soeuer I commaunde thee, that shalt thou speake. &c. Iere. 1. What happened vnto Ionas for refusing the vocation of God, is more euident than nedeth rehearsal of wordes.

So from this matter he commeth by litle & litle to his purpose, saying: I knowe not what shall become of me there, nor what the cause is that the spirite so bygeth me, to take this iourney, but the same spirite telleth me, that euery where, afflictions and bandes are prepared for me, which thing the holie Prophets in euery Church with one consent testifie. Yet must I goe thorough all these pykes and daungers, yea and through death also, considering it so seemeth good vnto God, who only hath power both vpon my selfe and death. This place is very worthe to be considered, bicause it may serue much both for our instruction and consolation. For first it declareth the faythfull care of God, which vseth to defende and prouide for those that be his. For where he loueth entirely, he can not chose but consider them, and giue them warning in time, of all thinges that shall befall them. For howe can he neglecte his seruauntes that honoure him, seing he forsetheweth the paines of the wicked, & bringeth no calamitie vpon them, but he first warneth them thereof by his Prophetes. Nexte we see howe God also warneth those that be his, Paule vnderstood, that bandes & afflictions were prepared for him, at Hierusalem. But what the ende hereof should be, the holy Ghost, as yet had not reueled vnto him. God therefore after a generall sorte, for the most parte, admonisheth those that be his, although he declare not the perticulers of euery thing. For he reueleth as much vnto them, as is needefull for them to know, so that they may prepare themselves to beare the Crosse, but to leaue all the successe thereof vnto him. So we haue generall predictions, whereby we are admonished, that we shall suffer tribulations and aduersities in the worlde.

The chiefe vse whereof is, that we shoulde prepare our selues to beare them, least if they fel on vs vnarmed, they would be occasion of greater offence. Thirde lyt behoueth vs to obserue the counsell of God, which he is wont meruellously to shewe, towarde his faythfull seruauntes. Paule being many times before warned of the brethren, eyther by flying saued him selfe, or else prudently defeated his ennemies awaytes. Nowe is he also admonished of bandes and afflictions, but he is so byged and prycked forward by the spirit of God, that he vnderstandeth he must wade through the middle of them, notwithstanding the brethren greatly dissuade him to the contrarie. We reade also that Iesus Chryst, sometime auoyded the attempts and laying wayte of his ennemies, yet at length he commeth forth to meete them, when he perceiued his houre was come, and that the eternall decree of his heauenly father so required. These thinges teach vs, that daungers are not alwayes sufficient occasions, for a man to flye. For when we are byged with the sure vocation of God, we must not suffer our selues to be reuoked, neyther through fire nor sworde, nor floudes of the maine Sea (as once happened at the redde Sea) from doing our duetie, wherevnto we perceiue we are called of God.

But bycause he would not put his friendes and brethren to much in feare, he vseth an Apostolyke and Christian consolation, saying: Howe of

these

Pauls con-
stancie and
faith.

None of these things moue me. As who should say: I woulde not haue you to be greued for my sake. For why should you take any sorrowe for these things, that I make no accounte off? Why Paule, dost thou then contemne the Oracles of the holy Ghost, and the louing admonitions of thy brethren? No, but I therfore little esteeme the present daungers that be at hande, bicause I passe little of my life, that is to say, I esteeme not this temporall lyfe, more than my vocation, which the Lorde hathe appoynted me vnto. Yea, I desire to finishe my course ioyfully, and to satisfie my office and duetie by publishing the Gospel of the grace of God in all places. Therefore where I haue long sithence dedicated my lyfe vnto Chryste, imprisonmentes and afflictions can not make me asfayde. This example of Paule declareth howe the godly should vse themselves in aduersitie. Firste they should not so care for tribulations, that for the auoyding of them, they should committe any vncomely and vnworthy parte. Otherwise God will not haue vs ledde with that Stoikes riddle, but that wee should not haue more consideration of our selfe, than of his vocation. There can bee no greater comforte in this case, than if men oftentimes meditate vppon Gods prouidence, which Chyrist setteth before his Disciples, and Dauid maketh this to bee his onely defence and safest Sanctuarie, that he beleueth His fleetings are numbered with God, and hys teares putte in his bottell. Math. 10. Psalm. 56. Nexte, let them take herde that they preferre not this temporall lyfe, before the eternall. Let them rather consider howe God hath lente vs this lyfe, to liue vnto him, and if neede also so require, to dye vnto him. And bicause we must once dye, we can neuer dye happelier, than in Gods vocation. For so shall that saying of Dauid be verified on vs, Precious in the sighte of the Lorde is the death of his Saints. And if it be unlawfull to preferre this lyfe before the life euerslasting, howe muche lesse oughte we to preferre riches, honours, pleasures, and suche other worldly commodities as these, before the same? For what aduantage it a man to get all the worlde, and to lose his soule? Or what thing is so precious, that it can redeeme but one soule? Finally, the godly muste labour all that in them is, to passe all aduersities ioyfully, and to accomplishe their course, that is, the office wherewith they are put in charge, prosperously. For it sufficeth not to beginne well, but to continue still on, as wee haue often tymes declared. Let all men therefore remember that this lyfe is lyke vnto a race, the ende whereof is death, which they moste ioyfully take holde of which do their duetie even vnto the ende.

Math. 10.
Psalm 56.

Psalm 116.

Math. 16.

Luc. 9.

But before we go any further, let vs see how Paule speaketh of the Gospel and the Ministerie thereof. He calleth it the Gospel of the grace of God, of the effecte thereof, bicause it offereth to vs the grace of God: it teacheth vs that we be reconciled to God the father, through his sonne Iesus Chryste. Hereby it appeareth what great vngodlynesse theirs is, which wickedly disdaine and contemne the Gospel. They be like vnto seditious people, which thinke it not inough to moue and stirre sedition against the Magistrates but wil also scornfully deride the grace which is offered them of the Magistrates, and fowly intreate the messengers sent vnto them with the same. For it is euident that all we are gyltie of sedition against God, & haue deserued destruction. But God pardoneth al our

The gospel
the grace of
God.

Iosu. 15.
Actes. 1.

Math. 8.

Paule forer
sheweth his
death.

Iosu. 24.
1. Reg. 2.

Math. 8.

Psal. 68.

Pauls pro-
testation.

offences for the merite of his sonne, and declareth that grace and fauor to vs by his Gospell. Whiche, whosoever refuse, verily they declare themselves to be utterly inexcusable, and unworthy of pardon hereafter. Again speaking of the ministry, he useth this word, testifying, whereby we haue oftentimes declared, is vnderstanded a playn, free, & earnest kinde of preaching. For the Gospell is not a bare and simple narration of a thing done, but a testimonie of Iesus Christ. And Christe him selfe calleth his Apostles witnesses. They earnestly therefore preached Christ, yea they testified not onely in words and deedes, but also by their lyfe and blood, that Christ was the sauour of the worlde, for the which cause they are commonly called Martyrs. That we say the Apostles did, the same muste all christians do likewise. For Christ wil haue vs to confesse him before this worlde, and acknowledgeth none for his seruants which are ashamed of him & his gospell, before this adulterous & naughty generation. But concerning Paule, because he would haue his exhortation to haue the more authority with the, he repeateth in a short recapitulation, to what ende he spake those things which he had heretofore said, he maketh mention again of his departure, & not that only, but also he plainly testifieth, & they shall see him no more hereafter, saying: And now behold I am sure, that henceforth al you, through who I haue gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Here he doth as parents vse to do, being redy to depart this life, which in their admonitions oftentimes vse the like, thereby meaning to leaue the sharper things in the hearts of their childre. Pauls intent & purpose is worthy of al praise & diligent obseruation, whose maruelous & bold constance appereth in these few words. For althogh he knoweth that this is the last meeting he shold haue with the, & therefore looketh for nothing but death, yet he doth not with womanly weeping bewaile his departure, nor vttereth any token of sadness or priuat sorrow, but is only carefull for & welth of their churches, & only desireth the to be careful for the same. Which example teacheth vs, what minds we shold haue in the consideration of death, or else when death approacheth & is at hand. We must in such case beware of this womanish pulnesse, wherewith many so bewaile their state & condition, as though God had appointed the only to dye: & are with such sorrow & care pulled fro their kinnsfolke & friends, as though there remained none in the world, through whose care & prouidence they might liue in safety whē they were gone. Howbeit they ought rather to remember, that this is the way of al flesh, as Iosua & David testifie. What iniurie then receyue we, if we do but as al others do? As touching our frends, wiues & children, neither do we lose them by death, but either we send the afore, being our selues shortly after redy to folow, or els we go before the, to that place whither they must folow, where Christ hath prepared vs a countrey, & where the faithful of al natiōs shal sit with Abraham, Isaac, & Iacob. And the tutor & patrone of those we leaue behind vs is God, who the scriptures call the defender of the strangers and widows, & the father of the fatherlesse. Therefore they must be committed to his charge, & we must take with stedfast faith that way which leadeth to heuē, through the merite of Christ. Last of all Paule vseth a most weighty protestatiō, wherein he layeth the fault of their perdition on their owne heads, if they neglect the Churches committed to their charge, and suffer them to stray from the fayth. I take you (sayth

he)

he) to recorde this day, that I am pure from the bloud of all men. The reason is, for that I haue spared no labour, but haue shewed you al the counsell of God. Undoutedly he had a respect vnto the words of God red in Eze. 3. 7. 33. where the bloud of those that perish is imputed to the minister, if he do not expressly giue them warning, but him self is free fro al fault, if he do his duetie faithfully. And bycause Paule so did, as one not culpable in his owne conscience, thus he speaketh. Also he seemeth to follow the example of singular men, such as Moses & Iosua were, who we read bled not much unlike protestations, a little befoze their death. Paules example teacheth vs, that they are excused befoze God, which do their dutie, although they little or nothing preuaile among the people committed to their charge. For they are gyttie of destruction that continue in incurablenesse. And this doctrine is not to be applied onely to the Ministers, but also vnto all degrees of men. And that it ought to haue place in the Magistrates, the example of Iosias declareth, whome the holy Ghoste maruellously commendeth, although he had many in his kingdome, yea in his Courte, that were not very sounde, and many playne incurable and wicked, as the Sermons of Sophonias the Prophete testifie. The lyke reason is to be made of Parents. For oftentimes it cometh to passe, that godly fathers haue children that go out of kinde, and yet the childrens wickednesse is not prejudiciall to the fathers, if they fayle not of their duetie, in seeing to their children. Wee haue ensamples in the sonnes of Iacob the Patriarche, of Dauid, and of diuers like. But if Magistrates and parents forget their duetie, and with ouermuche tendernesse or euill example, infect those that are committed to their charge, then the seueritie of Gods iudgement, will fall vpon them, as we see in the Scripture by the example of Heli. Heere haste thou what to answer to suche, that thinke it good to cease where no hope of profyte is. This is nowe objected both agaynst Magistrates and Ministers, and with this argument the fluggish vse to flatter themselues. But do thou thinke that thy soule is also in danger, which thou canst deliuer none other wayes, than by faythful diligence, and if thou deliuer hir, then thinke not that thou haste laboured in bayne. It appereth also by this place, what a miserable condition they are in, who, where their predecessours haue wel discharged their duetie befoze, they eyther like fluggardes giue ouer, or else with their naughtinesse corrupte that, that other befoze them haue well ordered. For they are altogether gyltie, and boyde of excuse befoze God, forasmuch as they which befoze had the charge of them are cleare from the bloud of them. This ought to be obserued in the Churches of this age, reformed by the word of God. The reformatiō hereof was both laborious & very dangerous. What excuse then shall the light backsliders haue, seeing that the very dust of the Ministers, shall suffice to conuince the, as we haue other wheres declared. The like is nedeful to be obserued in the cōmon weale. In Heluetia we enioy a libertie redemed with the bloud of our Ancestrie. Good lawes are made out of the doctrine of the Gospell, & a discipline of maners instituted with much labour & paynes. Then wo vnto vs wretches & worthy of all punishment, if either through cowardly fear, or light demeanour or wickednesse, we suffer these things to be take fro vs, in which our publike weale consisteth. So the faythful industrie & care of the parents, maketh the chil-

Deut. 30.
Iosu. 24.

1. Sam. 3. 3.
and 4.

2. Cor. 12.

dren inexcusable, if they bee not answerable vnto the same. Finally it is all mens duetie well to remember this, least while they flatter them selues, they put the faulte in another, whereof they are guilty. It is further worthy to bee obserued, that Paule hath shewed them all the counsell of God, namely touching our redemption and saluation. Wee knowe otherwyse that there are many thinges in the prouidence of God, which it is not lawefull for vs to searche out, neither can they be declared by tong, suche as Paule testifieth he heard in the thirde heauen. But he omitted none of the thinges whiche concerne our saluation, because he hath declared the causes and reason thereof, and also moste truly reported the duties of them which are saved. Whereupon agayne wee gather, that the Apostles doctrine conteyned in the Scriptures, is perfect and absolute in all poyntes. Therefore the vanitie of them is very rache, which thruste the traditions of men into the Church, whereof the greatest part playnly repugne agaynst the doctrine of the Apostles, which teache vs, that Chryste alone is our Sauour. For it can not be, that the thinges so playnly repugnaunt amongst them selues, can haue one selfe spirite of God, to bee the authoz of them. Laste of all, thou shalte note, that though Paule shewed all the counsell of God vnto the Ephesians, yet afterwarde he wrote an Epistle to them, wherein he expounded the same vnto them agayne. By this example wee are taught, what a care and consideration Ministers of the Church muste haue of all mens saluation, and howe lyttle Apostolyke they are, which so easily neglecte the Churches. In the meane season let vs learne to embrace with true fayth and obedience the counsell of God, reuealed to vs by the Apostles, in Iesus Chryste, that wee following the same, may attayne vnto true saluation, throughe Iesus Chryste our onely Lorde and Sauour, to whome be prayse, honour, power and glory, for euer. Amen.

The Cxxxv. Homelie.

TAke hede therefore vnto your selues, and to all the flocke, among whom the holy ghost hath made you ouerseers, to rule the congregation of God, which he hath purchased with his blood. For I am sure of this, that after my departure shall greuous wolues enter in among you, not sparing the flocke. Morcouer of your owne selues shal men arise, speaking peruerse things to draw Disciples after them. Therefore awake and remember that by the space of three yeres I ceased not to warne euery one of you night and day with teares. And now brethren I comend you to God, and to the worde of his grace, which is able to builde further, and to giue you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.



eing nothing is more deare and precious to God than the church, which he hath purchased with the blood of Chryst, it becommeth all men, that will be compted for Gods seruantes and frendes, to studie for the preservation thereof: but cheefely this care belongeth to the Ministers of the woorde, because God hath made them peculiar ouerseers

of

of his Church, and will hereafter require an account of their stewardship. For the which cause Paule the Apostle, being ready to forsake Asia, called to the Ministers of the Church, and in open assembly before them, discoursed diligently of all things, which appertained to the administration of the charge committed unto them. And first he setteth before them his owne example, and speaketh of his going away from them, with a moste graue protestation, that they might know, how al the charge of the church hereafter lay on them only, and therfore that they ought the more earnestly and zelously to labour therein. Moreover after these premises he commeth nearer, admonishing them more plainly of their duetie, alleaging moste pithie reasons, the rather to prouoke them.

First, propounding the summe of the matter in fewe wordes, he sayth: Take hede vnto your selues, and to all the flocke. By this worde (attending or taking hede,) he commendeth to them an earnest studie, that they should not think they had then done their duetie, when they had but superficially seene vnto it, but that they should know there was great neede of care and circumspection. And he propoundeth two things, wherein they had neede to be circumspect. First he saith: Take hede to your selues. This he commaundeth them, because they should not think their selues excepted or excused, but that their health and wel doing was in hazard, as well as others mennes. And as it is scarce credible, that they shall haue any earnest care of others saluation, which neglect their owne: so they, which bearing set in high degree, ought to biew the life, manners, and conuersation of others, can not be out of daunger. For either they shall swarue at one side, and runne into ruine, being puffed bp with vaine glory, or else they shall be drawne from doing their duetie, by being offended with mennes vniuste iudgements of them. Therfore it is not without a cause, that he admonisheth them to take hede of them selues. And heere it behoueth pastoures to haue a special care of two things. The one is doctrine, wherein they can not erre without manifest detriment. That their doctrine therefore may be true, let it be taken from the mouthe of God, which speaketh vnto vs, in the scriptures, and distributing the same in prudent maner, let them vse it duely, in time and place, that all things may serue to edification. Because this is a matter of no small importance, the continuall studie and reading of holy scripture is needefull, as the same Paule teacheth vs in another place. The other is conuersation of life, which in Ministers behooueth to be well ordered, and blamelesse, least they destroy with their euill example, that they builde bp by their doctrine, and that by their meanes, bothe doctrine and religion growe not in contempt, as we read it came to passe sometimes vnder the children of Hely, and the wicked Priests, that returned from Babylon. 1.Sam.2.Malach.1.and.2. And for the auoyding of these and such like things, it is necessary that they haue a good regard not onely to their owne persons, but also to their whole familie. For how shall he be able to rule the Church of God, which is not able to rule hys owne house? 1.Timoth.3. Titus.1. Then secondly he commendeth to them the charge of the whole flocke, wherein he is somewhat long, as wee shall heare. Under this worde flocke, he comprehendeth the Church, therein folowing both the Prophets and Chryst, which many times bled the like Allegorie or translation. And the vse of this word is very com-

Let Ministers take hede to the selues.

1. Timoth. 4
2. Timoth. 3

1. Sam. 2
Malach. 1.2

1. Timoth. 3
Tit. 1

Let Ministers looke vnto the whole flock

inodious, because it containeth in it very expressely, all states and degrees of men, as doe these woordes, house, and familie, whereby otherwhyles the Church bleseth to be termed. For these woordes admonishe both the Ministers, and the people, of their duetie.

The Ministers learne that the care of al men appertaineth vnto them, and that it is not lawfull for them, to neglecte any man, be hee learned or vnlearned, noble or base, rich or poore, maister or seruaunt, but must rather thinke, that in a great house are many and diuers instruments which the good man of the house will haue all the seruantes to haue a diligent and conuenient care off. Againe, the hearers learne, that all men vniuersally, of what estate or degree so euer they bee, ought to bee subject to the Ministerie and Discipline of the worde, and that no man is free therefrom, which will bee accounted one of Goddes flocke or familie. For that that God saide vnto Hieremie, is well knowne to euery bodie: Beholde, this day doe I make thee a strong fenced Towne, an yron Pillar, and a Brasen wall againste the whole lande, againste the Kings and mightie men of Iuda, againste the Preestes and people of the lande. Therefore, it was not without a cause that the Prophets in times past, tooke vpon them to reprehensive and admonishe all states of men, as their Sermones testifie, whome John the Baptist did immitate, and reprehended not only the common people, but also the Publicanes, Souldiours, Scribes, and Priestes, moste earnestly, yea, hee was so bolde to tell Herode the King, that it was not lawfull for him to kepe his brothers wife. The like did Christe, being otherwise the mildest man that euer was, which would not deuide the inheritance betweene the brethren, because hee would doe nothing not belonging to his office. The same did the Apostles, and their successours, whose laboures and trauailes, the church dothe reuerence yet to this day. Therefore their blockishnesse is very grosse, and their rebellion very obstinate, which challenge to them selfe a certaine immunitie and freedome, saying, the Ministers haue nothing to doe with their matters.

But because it is needefull with reasons to bryge and sette forward our dull fleshe in difficulte and daungerous functions, Paule therefore bleseth reasons, and in the beginning hee comprehendeth diuers in very fewe woordes. For he saythe: Looke vnto the flocke, among whome the holy Ghoste hath made you ouerseers, to feede the congregation of GOD, which he hath purchased with his bloude.

First, hee alleageth God to be the authoz of his Ministerie, to declare that they are not free and at their owne libertie, but ought to be occupied in the vocation of God, vnto whome they shall once giue an accompte, as Christe teacheth in the Parables of the Talentes and Stewarde. Hee maketh mention of the holy Ghoste by name, because Christe by him doth cheefely rule and gouerne his Church, as in the first and seconde Chapters of this Booke we might perceiue. And this is a waightie reason if we consider howe we shall giue an accompte vnto him, from whome nothing is hidden, and which beholdeth with what minde and beleefe wee doe all things, and which is not onely a iudge, but also a swifte witnesse against all those, which cast from them the feare of him, and neglect their duetie, as he threatneth them in the Prophet. And this reason ought to

awake

Jerem 1

Ministers
are ordained
of God.
Math. 23.
Luke. 16.

Malach. 3

awake and stirre vp, not onely the Ministers of the woorde, but also all other personnes, which take God for the authoure of their vocation and estate.

Let Magistrates remember, that they are aduanced to honoure and dignitie by God, and that he sitteth in the middle of them, and that they shall not escape, if they neglect their Office. Let Lordes and Maisters remember, that they also haue a Maister in Heauen, vnto whome they shall geue an accompte. Let married folke remember that God is the authour of their estate, who as he hath appoynted the marriage Chamber to bee honourable, so will hee greuously punishe Adoulters and Whoremongers. Hebrues. 13. Also let Parentes consider, that God hath giuen them a charge ouer their Children, and therefore that they canne not neglecte their Children wythoute the manifest faulte of vntrustinesse. Likewyle lette Seruauntes and Subiectes learne to obey their Maisters and Princes, not onely for feare of punishment, but also for conscience sake, bicause God hath made them subiecte vnto them, whose sight they shall neuer beguile. though they can beguile men.

Psal. 82.

Ephes. 6.

Heb. 13.

Thys doone, he setteth before them, the ende of theyr duetie, saying, they are made ouerseers by the holy Ghoste to feede the Church of God. Hee alludeth vnto Ezechiel in the thirde, and thirtie three Chapters, where the Prophetes are called ouerseers, or watchmen. And to the ende they shoulde not thinke that their duetie consisted in a bare and baine speculation, hee vseth this woorde, to feede, to the intente they shoulde remember they were feeders, and therefore oughte to fulfill the duetie of feeders. These poynts are partly expessed by Christ in the 10. of John, & partly by Ezechiel in the foure and thirtie Chapiter. For a good Shepheard bringeth his flocke into well grown pastures, he goth before them like a faithfull guide, hee seeketh for them that are strayed and lost, hee bringeth them home againe, he bindeth vp his woundes that is contrite in heart and conscience, he strengtheneth the weake, he keepeth them vnder that growe to fatte, hee stoutely resisteth the Wolves, and all these things he doth circumspectly, and with iudgement.

Secondly,
the ende of
Ministers,
is to feede.

Paule admonisheth the Ephesians and Ministers of Asia, of all these things, where he sayth they are appoynted to feede. Woulde God the Bishoppes of our dayes would remember these things, who where they doe none of these things, but all things quite contrary, yet after an impudent sorte, they challenge to them selues, not onely the titles of Bishops, but also exercise a manifest tyrannie ouer the Church, and like Princes of this world, obtaine a kingdome vpon earth, contrary to the commaundement of Christ. But what they shall haue for their labour, see Ezechiel. 34. and Zacharie the. 11. Chapiters.

The third reason is deduced of the dignitie of the Church, which appeareth in this, for that God purchased it with hys bloude. Hee attributeth bloud vnto God by a figure called communione, or proprietie of tongues, bicause Iesus Christ which is God from euerlasting, at a time long befoze appointed, became man, and redeemed the Church with the price of his bloud. Therefore the Church is deare vnto Christ, and they are guiltie of the bloud of Christ, that neglecte the Church, and either abolishe the profite thereof themselue, or else suffer it to perishe and decay.

Thirdly,
the dignitie
of y church.

Marke

Ephc. 5

1. Peter. 1

Fourth of
necessitie.

1. Tim. 4

Marke howe the Church belongeth to no one man, but vnto God, who hath redeemed and purged hir with his blood, and espoused hir vnto him selfe. Therefore, as no man may challenge vnto him selfe, rule ouer the spouse of God: so euery one that is a membre of the same, must looke that they consecrate them selues to God onely, and addicte not them selues to worship any creature, that they be not punished for their execrable fornication. Also this serueth for our consolation, that it is impossible, that God should neglecte them, whome hee redeemed with so great a price. Thinke that there is the like reason before God of all creatures. For as euery man is created after the image of God: so are they redeemed and purchased with the blood of the sonne of God. Shalt thou then go unpunished, if thou slander any of them, do him wrong, violently hurt him, or contumeliously disdain him, or offend him in religion, or conuersation of life? Read the things wyrtten of Paule. Rom. 14. which make much for this place, and the 8. chapter of the first to the Corinthians.

The fourth reason, is borrowed of necessitie. For he declareth that it is necessary, that the church be diligently seene vnto, because it was in great daunger of wolues, or false teachers. For althoughe the Shepheard may sometimes be at leasure, or take his sleepe, when there is no suspicion of daunger: yet then is it no time of idlenesse nor sleepe, when the Wolues begin to howle, and to be seene comming in companies together. I am sure (saith Paule) that after my departure, grievous wolues shall enter in, which shal not spare the flock: yea of your owne selues shall men arise, which shall miserably peruert the simple doctrine of truth, labouring rather to gette to them selues schollers, than to Christ, whose glory they ought only to seeke. Paule knew that such should arise, euen by peculiar reuelation of the holy spirite. For otherwheres prophesying of false teachers, he maketh the holy Ghost the aucthor of prophesie. Howbeit, let vs marke in this place, the faithfull care of God, in vsing to prouide for his Church. The Church is as a flock or kid in the middle of a sort of wolues. But God so careth for hir that he giueth hir diligent warning, not only of present dangers, but also of dangers to come. For there are Prophecies of Antichrist, and Antichristian teachers. Christ also reasoning of the later dayes, so describeth these false Prophets, that he must willingly and wittingly perish, that beleueth them. The wyrttings of the Apostles are full of the like aduertisements, which for breuities sake I omit. In the meane time we learne howe they do te, which now a dayes would haue nothing but the bare doctrine of truthe taught, but will not haue the Church admonished of present dangers, and the Wolues to be reprobued, because they see that the exclamations of the Shepherdes, bere a make the Wolues the more fierce. As thoughe it were possible to tame Wolues, or if no man take them in hand, to alter their nature, and that the Shepherdes ought not rather to haue this marke before their eyes, to teache the sheepe to beware of the Wolues. How foolishly was it done of the Apostles, to admonish vs of Wolues to come, if no man now a dayes must finde fault with them that go abroad? Secondarily, let vs marke, how he saith these Wolues shall come when he is gone. For they are afraid while the faithfull Ministers are present, and throughe their diligence and care, they are kepte backe from breaking in among vs. But because this unkinde world com-

monly

monly little esteemeth the diligence of such men, God suffereth Wolves to burst into the whole flocke like wilde and unbrideled horses, when the faithful Ministers are gone. And we lacke not examples inough to proue the same. Let vs learne therfore how much we haue to make of faithfull and diligent ouerseers as well of the Church, as of the common weale, the deathes and departures of whom, be commonly tokens of great misfortunes, and publike calamities to come.

Thirdly, lette vs see the description of false teachers, and what their trade is. The Apostle calleth them Wolves, after the example of Christ, who it appeareth called them by the same name. They are so called, because of their naturall hatred against the flocke of Christ, and also greedynesse for that insatiable and rauine of theirs, to spoile and wourrie the Church. He declareth also from whence these Wolves arise. They shall arise (sayth he) from among your selues. So sayth Iohn: they went out from vs. &c. And Paule sheweth vs Antichristes seate, euen in the very Church. 2. Thess. 2. It is profitable diligently to obserue the same, that we be not offended with the falling away of some light persons, considering we see such become sodenly the enemies of truth, which a little before, seemed stout defenders of the same. For what new or strange thing is this? Seeing Iudas for a certaine space had a rourne among the Apostles, and Paule knew that from among them to whome he so carefully commended the Church, wolves wold arise: Also heereby is confuted the perrish and delish vaunts of the Bishops of Rome, which they now adayes stand so much vpon. For they think it is impossible, that the bishops of that church shuld erre, whose accompte of succession, they can make from the times of the Apostles. But to graunt them, that Peter and Paule had ouce bene Bishops of Rome (which yet they shall neuer be able to proue) will they deny, that their successours may erre? But Pauls successours among the Ephesians, were these rauening Wolves, of whome he biddeth them to beware. But as the Papacie consisteth of nothing but bifulres & shewes, so must the maiestie therof, ready shortly to fal downe, be vpholden with counterfet and bifulred arguments. Furthermore, he toucheth their doctrine, where he sayth they shall speake wrested and peruerse things. For the declaration of truthe is plaine and simple, which false teachers with their gloses vse to peruert, to make intricate, and by so doing, to make all things vncertaine. Moreover their ende is, to draw disciples after them. They deuide the Church therfore with sectes, as Peter foretolde should come to passe. But Histories declare, that Pauls warning was not in vaine. For it is well knowne what swarmes of Heretickes, most miserably disturbed the Church the whole world ouer.

And if a man would compare these things with our dayes, it shall appeare, that Pauls admonition, is as needefull in these dayes, as euer it was. For out of the Church euery day, procede those greuous Wolves, which now we are growne to suche impudencie, that they go about to couer them selues no longer in sheepe skins, but rather publike profess their thirst of Christian bloude, with skarlet coloure, and their tyrannie with clinking of armour, and garrisons of men. By meane of these, the doctrine of truthe lyeth wrapped and entangled in infinite erreours and labyrinthes, and as it were euen buried. And the same parties haue rent

The descrip
tion of false
teachers.

Math. 7

Iohn. 10.

1. Iohn. 2

2. Thess. 2

2. Peter. 2

the Church, which ought most to maintaine vnitie, haue rent the Church into five hundred sectes, euery one of them professing a propre and sundry faith and religion, in name, habite, ceremonies and vsages. Lette vs awake O brethren, and goe against these Wolues, and take heede that we be not found to be hirelings rather than true Shepherdes.

Secondly,
of the ex-
ample.

But let vs heare Paule, which repeating his example (which is the .b. argument) exhorteth them most earnestly, saying: Wherefore awake, and remember, that by the space of three yeeres, I ceased not to warne euery one of you, night and day with teares. He maketh mention of these three yeres, because they should thinke no labor or trauaile too much. For it should be a shame not to take labor and paines, seeing suche an Apostle of Christ refused it not. And they be in no small fault, which by their negligence let the Churches, gathered together by the trauailes and deathes of the Apostles, run at hauocke. Furthermore, as it becommeth the Ministers to follow the example of the Apostles: so must all Christians followe their steppes, for as much as they were the followers of Christ, as Paule himselfe declareth, where he sayth: be yee folowers of me, as I am the folower of Christ. And this is the true worshipping of the Saintes, not that that standeth in adozation and inuocation of them, which al the scripture saith is due to God onely.

1. Cor. 11

Sixthly, of
the facilitie
and vtilitie.

Sixthly, he reasoneth of the easinesse and vtilitie of their doing herein, to answer them, which were feared with the difficultie and daunger that was on euery side. And for a moze vehemencie of speche, he bleth a forme of imprecation, saying: and nowe brethren, I commend you vnto God, and to the worde of his grace, which is able to build. &c. As who should say: I knowe it is a difficult matter that I require, and passing all mans power. Howe be it, it must not be brought to passe by mans force. This is Gods husbandry, this is Gods worke. He laid the foundation, he therefore is able to finishe the building, and it is no difficult thing for him to be your helpe, to bring his matter to passe. By his assistance therefore you shall easily overcome all things. Hee shall guide you with his spirit, and the worde of grace, which though it seeme but a slender thing, yet it pearseth, and cutteth sharper than any two edged sworde. The same God hath prepared worthy rewardes already for suche trauailes and paines, euen the inheritance of his kingdome, where you shall shine among them that are sanctified, like as the starres in the firmament. These things must be layde vp in the bottome of our hartes O brethren. For as they comfort vs in marvellous wise, so they teache vs what the weapons and strength of the Ministers of the worde are. The weapons of our fight be spirituall, sayth Paule. These be the spirit of God, the worde and God him selfe. Who shall they then feare? Or who shall bee able to withstande them. Lette vs fight with these weapons, rather than with the friendships of this world. as with the confederacie and wisdom of the flesh, which haue very little, or no vse at all in setting vp the kingdome of God.

Dani 12

2. Cor. 10

We learne moreover, that the inheritance of the kyngdome of Heauen pertaineth onely to them that are sanctified. The sanctified are suche, whose hartes faith hath purified, and whome Christ hath consecrated to GOD the Father, throughe the price of hys Bloud.

The

The same beeing quickened with the spirit of God, doe their dueties earnestly, and strue earnestly to enter into that inheritance through all kinde of daungers, the hope whereof they knowe will neuer deceiue them, because it dependeth vppon the sonne of God our sauoure Iesus Christe: to whom all praise, honoure, power and glory are due for euer. Amen.

The. Cxxxvj. Homelie.

I Haue desired no mannes siluer, golde, or vesture, yea, yee your selues knowe that these handes haue ministred vnto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I haue shewed you all things, howe that so labouring yee ought to receiue the weake, and to remember the woordes of the Lorde Iesu, howe that he saide it is more blessed to giue than to receiue. And when he had thus spoken he kneeled downe, and prayed with them all. And they all wept fore, and fell on Pauls necke, and kissed him, sorowing moste of all for the woordes which hee spake, that they should see his face no more. And they conueyed hym vnto the shippe.



Because the Apostle Paule, in that notable assemblie of the Ministers of Asia, where he reasoned of the administration and gouernance of the Church, foretolde of greuous Molues that should rise vp, euen out of their own selues, which throughe peruerse Doctrine, should miserably disturb the flocke of Christ: in the later part of his oration, he declareth bothe wisely, and in time and place, what they should cheefely beware of, if they would auoide the name of suche Molues. He admonisheth them onely to take heede of couetousnesse, because it is the roote of all euill, and bringeth all things out of frame, if it once take possession in the mindes of the Cleargie. For when they once make lucre of religion, it causeth all godlinesse to be set to sale, which also is a cause, that they defile the doctrine of the woorde, with the traditions of men, that they hunt after the fauor and frendship of the world, that they winke at open malefactoures, and set open the doores, to all manner of disorder. The priestes of the Jewes may be an example vnto vs, in whom Christ cheefely reprehendeth this as the wellspring of all corruption. Therefore Paule dothe not without a cause other wheres warne Bishoppes that they be not giuen to filthie lucre, and heere in this place, he diligently reasoneth of this euill.

And because his admonition should bee the more of waighte, he prouoketh them by hys owne Example, declaring howe he vsed himselfe whyle hee was in Asia, and alleageth waightie reasons and causes of his so doing. I haue desired no mannes siluer, gold, or vesture, saith he. By the which woordes, he declareth that he labored not to enriche him selfe

He deho-
teth them
from cou-
tousnesse by
his exaple.

1. Timoth. 6

1. Sam. 12

Why Paule
requireth
not the sti-
pend due
vnto him.

1. Cor. 9

2. Cor. 11

by them; forasmuch as he desired not of them the things necessary to his living, muche lesse receiued or tooke them. Hereby he teacheth, that the Ministers of Churches must be free from the desire of heaping by goods, because they that goe about to enrich them selues, shall neuer escape the snares of the Deuill and temptations. But least any man might Obiecte againe, and say, whereof then O Paule, liuedst thou? He addeth by and by after: yee knowe that these handes ministred to my necessities, and to those that were with me. For he was a maker of Tentes, by the which occupation we heard afore that he got his living at Corinth. Heere in this place marke the modestie of the Apostles, which had rather lose their righte, than to be chargeable to any body. Touching which thing, more is to be seene in the latter Epistle to the Thessalonians the thirde Chapter, and in the second to the Corinthians, the eleuenth Chapter. The like example of modestie we haue also in Samuel, who in an open and great assembly of all the people, did reioyce in the like thing, as Paule doth heere. These examples teache vs with what spirite those men are ledde, which eyther in the Church, or in the common weale, are onely carefull for their owne commoditie, and not contented with necessities, seke their pleasures and delites, of the labors and sweat of those that are needie.

Furthermore, he rendreth diligently the reason of his doing, least his example might prejudice or hinder the publike right of other Ministers. For it is manifest inoughe that Paule thought not that thing vnlawfull, that Christ had ordained, namely that they should liue of the gospel, that serue the gospel: nay he proueth most plentuously in other places, that it is moste lawfull of all other things, both by authoritie of scripture, and also by lawe of nature. Moreover he confesseth that he receiued money of the Macedonians, to the intent to serue the Corinthians of free coste. Therefore Paule had a farre other meaning, that was, to beare with the weake, and to teache all others, that they should not make laker of religion, and so bring religion in suspition, but rather by their free ministerie, and duetifull demeanour, they should commend both them selues and their doctrine, to be praised of all men. Therfore certaine euill occupied persons in these dayes do most foolishly make a generall doctrine of Pauls example, in that they would let the Ministers of the word to plow and to harrowe, and to keepe hogges: wherein it is manifest the Apostles heere in bled their right freely, and did as seemed good to them, where there was no occasion of offence. But if they say that Paul refrained to take his stipend at Ephesus & Corinth, because it was vnlawfull for him to require the same, then I would haue them answere me, with what equitie Paule toke stipend of the Philippians, and other contribution of money, when he preached to the Corinthians, and not to them? But if it was lawfull for him to vse their liberalitie, howe muche iustlier should hee haue done, to haue taken a pension of them, whom he daily preached vnto? It is euident therefore, that Paule willingly remitted to them his right, because hee would ther offend the weake, nor giue the wicked occasion to slander him. And as this modestie of Paule is to be commended, so the ingratitude bothe of the Ephesians and Corinthians, is to be worthily reprehended, which suffered the Apostle to liue of the labour of his handes, seeing hee bestowed himselfe and his labour, all together vpon them.

But

But for the more credite and authoritie of his example, and for a generall rule to be taken therof, he alleageth the saying of Chryst: It is more blessed to giue, than to receiue. Howbeit the wordes of this sentence are not extant in the writings of the Euangelistes, yet there are many lyke, whereof this may easily be gathered, bycause Chryst euery where exhorteth vs vnto charitie, and will haue those that be his, more ready to bestowe vpon others, than to receiue. Moreouer it appeareth sufficiently, that all Chrystes wordes and deedes were not put in writing, but out of a great many, those that sufficed abundantly for the instruction of our sayth and saluation. Wee muste yet see further the reason of this saying, and not sticke at the barke, that therefore it should seeme vnto vs more blessed to giue than to receiue, bicause by giuing our money and goodes, we should declare our liberalitie of minde, to be prayesed for it, and to make other men bound vnto vs. For these fleshy reasons sauer of vayne glory, and of the smell of the kitchen, wherewith we reade the very Ethnikes were enflamed to be liberall. But Chryst commendeth and requirerth liberalitie of Chrystians, for farre other causes. For firste it is more blessed to giue than to receiue, bycause the saythfull that doo it are disposers or Stewards of the goodes that God hath committed vnto them. For it is manifest that God hath giuen to some men more goodes than to other some, not without a cause, but hath made some richer than other some, to make rounne and place for charitie, and riche men be appoynted as patrons and tutors for the poore, to helpe them with their liberalitie. And howe can it be, but he muste be iudged blessed, which is saythfull in the office committed to him of God? Agayne, as Salomon sayth, They which giue vnto the poore, lende vnto the Lorde. For he counteth what soeuer is bestowed on them, to be giuen to him, and he is both a saythfull and liberall rewarder. Wherefore it can not be but he will keepe his promise, where he allureth men vnto liberalitie, as by these places it appeareth: Blessed is the man that disperseth abroad, and giueth to the poore. His righteousness remayneth for euer and euer, his horne shall be exalted with honour. Psalm. 112. Deale thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poore wandring home into thy house. When thou seest the naked couer him, and hyde not thy face from thine owne fleshe. Then shall thy light breake forth as the morning, and thy health flourish right shortly, thy righteousness shall goe before thee, and the glory of the Lorde shall embrace thee. Then if thou callest, the Lorde shall heare thee: if thou cryest, he shall say, heere I am. Finally, bicause we are in nothing so like vnto God, as in dooing well, we no maner of wayes more resemble the nature and similitude of God, than by helping of many. For as God only is blisse of him selfe, so is there no more certayn way of blisse, than to be most like vnto God, which thing christian liberalitie chiefly performeth. Wherefore although there be no recompence of benefites in this world, yet in deede it is a much more blessed thing to giue than to receiue. These things if we consider as we oughte, it shall appeare howe farre the Monks religion is distant from Chrystes doctrine, who set all blisse and felicitie in receyuing, whyle they renounce all such things as fall lawfully to them by inheritance, or other lawfull meanes, and professe wilfull pouertie, liuing of the labour of other men, where they ought rather to minister to other men foode and

It is more
blessed to
giue than to
receiue.

Prover. 19.

Isa. 58.

Monks
order ouer-
throwen.

Paulerōcludeth his sermons with prayers.

rayment. And so vnder a plausible pretence of wilfull pouertie, they lyue carelesse in delightes, beeing subiect to no misfortunes, as other men be.

But let vs retorne vnto Paule, which endeth his Sermon made to the Cleargy with publike prayers. For straightwayes he fell on his knees and prayed with them all. For where he knew that God only gaue all increase (as otherwheres he teacheth) therefore he was not bnmindfull of prayer, specially in a matter of such importaunce, wherby depended the saluation of al men. And hereof sprang that auncient and notable vslage of the Church, wherin sermons bled to be begon and ended with prayers, which prayers who so neglect, abundantly declare that they resorte vnto sermons more of curiositie, than either for desire of Gods glory, or their owne saluation, of which sort they are which are described in Ezechiel the xxxiii. Chapter. And as this example commendeth prayers, and specially publike prayers, which it behoueth vs to make with feruent affection of minde: so it teacheth vs to obserue also a godly modestie of behauiour in the same, wherby we testifie the meaning of our minde. Among these gestures, this is the moste auncient, where the godly men vse to pray on their knees, or else lying with their bodies prostrate on the ground, thereby setting themselves in order of humblenesse. They vse also commonly to lift vp their hands vnto heauen, both to declare the ardent desire of their minde, and also to testifie their fayth, wherby they firmly beleue that they shall receiue that they desire. Yet muste we take heede that we cloke not a naughtie minde with a bayne kinde of gesture, or that we lifte not vp handes embued with bloud. Touching bothe which vices, reade Esai. i. and. 29. Chapiters.

The godly are soze for Pauls departure.

After all these things Luke addeth Pauls departure out of Asia, in the which two things fall out chieflly to be marked. First, he sayth, they fell on weeping of all hands, and euen they whom Paule had somdeale more openly quipped. But they regarded not so muche their priuate reprehension, as the publike commoditie of the whole Church. They are therefore soze that the Church should be depriued of suche an Instrument, and they declare their sorrow, by weeping, embracing, and kissing. This is a very delectable example of mutuall charitie, wherein the Ministers and Congregations shoulde stryue, eche to ouercome others. Paule loued them wonderfully, as his whole trade of life declared. Therefore they agayne loued him, and reuerenced him, as their Apostle and Father. Where this mutuall affection reigneth, all things prosper well. But they which hate their Ministers, are for the moste parte moste vnhappy, as may evidently bee seene in the Israelites, which hated Moyse and Aaron. Also by this place the indolencie of the Stoikes is condemned. They thinke it vnlawfull for any man to shew any token of any affection. As though affections were euill of themselves, and not set in vs by nature, and that when any excesse is committed it were not through our default. God requirerh of vs a moderation of the minde, but will not haue men to become blockes or stones. Last of al they bring Paule to the shippe, which is a dutie of reuerence, and for the most parte proceedeth of loue. Here we learne that they are worthy of honoz, which labour diligently in setting forth the glory of God, or otherwise wel accomplish their dutie. Agayne we are taught, that God neuer letteth them go without glory,

Against the Stoikes.

that

that are such. For his promise is: I will honour those that honour me. Let ministers of the Church & Magistrates also, remember these things, that they may learne by like industrie to preserve and maintaine their authority. And let vs one with another lay to our helpes to the maintenaunce of the Church: so shall we hereafter be partakers of the heavenly honour wth Chryst our Lord and Sauour, to whome be prayse, honour, power and glorie, for euer. Amen.

The.xxj.Chapiter vpon the *Actes of the Apostles.*

The.Cxxxviij.Homelie.

ANd when it chaunced that we had launched forth, and were departed from them, we came with a straight course vnto Choon, and the daye following vnto the Rhodes, and from thence vnto Patara. And when we had gotten a Ship that would sayle vnto Phenices, we went aboard on it, and set forth. But when Cyprus began to appeare vnto vs, we lefte it on the lefte hande, and sayled vnto Syria, and came vnto Tyre, for there the Ship vnladed the burthen. And when we had found brethren, we tarried there seuen dayes. And they tolde Paule through the spirit, that he should not goe vp to Hierusalem. And when the dayes were ended, we departed and went our way, and they all brought vs on our waye, with wiues and children, till we were come out of the Citie. And we kneeled downe on the shoare, and prayed. And when we had taken our leaue one of another, we toke Ship, and they retourned home againe. When we had ful ended the course from Tyre, we went downe to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.



The holy Ghost rehearseth very diligently the paynfull and dangerous voyages of the Apostles, that by them we might learne the exceeding goodnes of God towarde vs, who woulde haue his elect instrumentes, and most faithful Ministers, for oure saluation sake, inured with such trauels and dangers, for that wee shoulde the more feruentely embrace the doctrine of the Gospel, which it behoued to haue sette forth wth so greate paynes. And to this ende must the hystorie of this Chapiter

be retere

Paule is taken
or pul-
led fro them
of Asia.

be referred, wherein we are taught how Paule passing many seas, through many hazardest came into Syria, and from thence to Ierusalem, where being courteously receiued of the godly, but betrayed by the sedicious, and apprehended, he was committed to the power of the Deputie or lieutenant of the Romanes, al which things we shal consider in their time & place. This place specially hath many things which make much for the explication of that we sayd euen now. Wherefore the Contents muste be the more diligently discussed, whiche at the first sight seeme but barren.

First it is declared how Paul unwillingly departed fro Athens, with his company. We launched forth (sayth he) and were plucked from them. On this sort it is said, Christ was pulled from his Disciples at mount Oliuet. Luc. 22. By which worde is declared a great grieve of minde, risen about his departure. And verily the causes of this grieve were neither fewe, nor yet tryling. For Pauls three yeres conuersation amongst them, had engendred a mutuall loue betweene them. And diuers arguments of this loue were apparaunt, all which these freshe teares and common grieve taken on all partes, called agayne to remembraunce. Moreouer Paule knew that he should come no more amongst them, which loued him so intierly, that he had lefte them in daunger of Wolves, whom he had trayned and brought to with great paynes and trauell. All these things had bene able to moue euen an heart of yron. Thus wee see Parentes mourne, when their children by death are pulled from them, which by reason of their minority are not yet able to helpe them selues. Yet Paule ouercommeth all grieve of minde, bicause he would obey the calling of God, which due him to Ierusalem. By which example wee are taught, that Gods will and calling muste be preferred before all affections. For it is impossible for vs to be wholly boyde of these affections, as long as we liue in the fleche: and it is euident, that they beare a stroke euen in the godly. But a moderation muste be vsed, to bring them vnder the obedience of sayth. And this must be obserued in all cases, but specially when by death our friendes be pulled eyther from vs, or we from them, whose good counsell and help we found to be very profitable for vs. Lette vs then remember we are byged with Gods calling, tohome to gaynesay or strue againste, as it is a verie rashe enterprize, so is it both foolish and daungerous.

Pauls nauigation
is long and
perillous.

Secondly, Luke describeth Pauls long and tedious voyage, which al men must confesse to haue bene both painefull and perillous. Wee will not tarie long in the description of the places, for that is to be sought for in the Geographers. And bicause there are so many places recited which Paule sayled by, without making any abode in them, it is a token, that hee made very great haste, to be at Ierusalem by the feast of Pentecost. Here is to be considered Pauls seruente industrie and diligence in the office committed to his charge, and his constant sayth. Hee might haue liued in the worlde (as he testifieth of himself writing to the Philippians) quietly and in honor. And his first state of life abundantly declareth, that he was of no smal authoritie among the Iewes. He saw moreouer, that in folowing of Christ, there was continuall paines and trauell, and euery day freshe daungers springing. Yet he embraced this kinde of life, according to Gods will and calling, and with a constant course ouercame them all, and whatsoever things in this worlde were either of gayne or glozy vnto him, those he

counted

counted as damageable, & set light of them, only for that he would winne Christ. Wherin it appeareth he was not a litle encouraged with the hope of that heauenly crowne, which he knew was laid by for him, and al that were godly. Let vs folowe the Example of so notable an Apostle, least we be either ouercome with trauals and dangers, or else being enticed with the allurements of the world, leaue of the course of our vocation prescribed by Christ. For what is there in this world stable or permanent? What thing is able to satisfie the desire of the minde, and of the flesh? Only God is omnisufficient, and perfect good, who hath opened to vs in Christ his sonne, the treasures of all goodnesse, in whome onely mennes mindes are quieted and at rest. He that drinketh of this fountaine, shall not thirst for euer. Happy therfore and blessed are they, that can exchaunge the counterfayte felicitie of this worlde, for the fountayne of this eternall blisse.

Thirddly, he telleth howe they came at lengthe vnto Tyrus, where wee haue diuerse things in order to bee considered. Among which this is one of the chiefe, that he sayth they founde Disciples at Tyrus, that is to say, certaine christian brethren, and such as might seeme to haue passed all those, of whom any mention hath bene made hitherto in dueties of fayth and charitie. Which may seeme a maruellous thing, if a man consider the auncient state of the Citie of Tyrus, and the horrible Oracles of the prophets agaynst the same, reporting hir to be both riotous, proud, couetous and lecherous. Yea Christ our Lord detesting the vnthankfulness of the Cities of Galilee, compareth them with Tyre and Sidon, vpon the which God in times past had shewed seuerer examples of his iustice. Yet euen in this same Citie shone the light of the Gospell: and heere would Christ haue a Church planted and endued with notable gyfts. Herein appeareth the truth of God, and his goodnesse towardes sinners which turne vnto him. For so he long agoe prophesied by Esay it should come to passe: After the ende of seauenty yeres shall the Lorde visite Tyre, and she shall conuert vnto hir reward, and she shall traffique with all the kingdomes of the earth. And hir traffique and wares shall be holy vnto the Lord. And in the .45. Psalme: And the daughter of Tyre shalbe there with a gyft, like as the riche also among the people shall make their supplications before thee. These things I say, this present place declareth to haue ben fulfilled, when Paule found christians there so feruent in fayth and loue. And this is a notable example of Gods goodnesse, wherby we are taught how we should not ouer hastily dispaire either of our selues, or of other men, seeing God would build him a Church in such a Citie, as vpon which he had in times before shewed so heauy an example of his iustice, by reason of the sinnes and offences of the same.

Againe Luke writeth, how the brethren of Tyrus admonished Paule by the spirite, that he shoulde not goe by to Ierusalem. This seemeth to repugne agaynst that whych Paule spake in the congregation at Malta, saying, he was bounde by the spirite to go thither. But these places are easily reconciled, if a man consider the figure called Synecdoche, which is very common in the holy scripture, where the whole communication of these disciples is attributed to the holy ghost, he being in dede & author but of one part onely. For they by inspiration of the spirite admonished Paule of the imprisonment & afflictions, which Paule was like to fynd at Ierusalem.

Phil. 3.

2. Tim. 4.

Paule com-
meth to
Tyre.
The church
of Tyre.

Math. 11.

Esa. 23.

Paule is ad-
monished
that he goe
not to Ieru-
salem.

But the Counsell they gaue him that he shoulde not go vp thither, was of their owne deuise, bycause of a louing affection they wished well vnto him, but were ignoraunt of Gods determination. For many times it cometh to passe, that the Prophetes through the reuelation of God, vnderstande what is to come, and yet are vtterly ignoraunt of Gods meaning, and the ende of his dooing, which is the cause that many tymes they erre in their dooings, whyles they are not contented with the reuelation of God, but take the wisdom of the fleshe vnto Councell, whereof we haue examples in Ionas & diuers others. In the mean season marke howe many wayes God woulde haue Paule to bee tempted. He draweth him to Ierusalem, beeing bounde by his spirite. In euery Citie and congregation, he telleth him howe he shall be layde by the heeles and impysoned. And now we come others endued with the spirite of prophesie, and warne hym that he goe not thither. Whereto serue all these things? Verily God mente heereby to prepare his Apostle to the crosse, by continuall premeditation, least he shoulde fall from him thorough the manyfolde clamour of the furious people, and entrappings of his enemies. Also he learneth vs heereby an example of christian constancie and obedience, whiche wee muste so earnestly labour to haue, that wee muste not obey men, though wee see rare examples of Gods holy spirite in them, if they counsell vs any thing contrary to the will and commaundement of God. Adde therevnto the unhappie ende of that Prophet, which beeing seduced by an other Prophet vnder the pretence of Gods oracle, eate meate in Bethell, contrary to the commaundement of God, and was deuoured of a Lyon. Learne also heereby to iudge of the apparicion of spirites, by the authoritie whereof Monkes commonly vse to proue their fictions of Purgatorie, and such other superstitions, which they know they can not proue by any Scriptures.

1. Reg. 13.

They of
Tyre accom-
pany Paule
to the shippe
bery wor-
shipfully.

Mark. 10.

1. Tim. 5.

Furthermore perceyuing that Paule folowed rather the calling of God, than their counsell, and helde on his boyage, they also yeilded vnto the will of God, and accompanied him worshipfully with their wyues and children out of the Citie. Wherin we may perceiue both a rare example of Christian charitie, and the truth of Chrystes promises, which are to be seene in the tenth of Marke in these words: Verily I say vnto you, who so euer forsaketh house, or brethren, or sistren, or father, or mother, or wyfe, or childre, or lands, for my sake & the Gospels, he shal receyue an hundred fold nowe in this time with persecutions, and in the worlde to come life euerlasting. For wee knowe that Paule forsooke all these thinges for Chrystes sake. Therefore he syndeth euery where brethren and sistres, whiche willingly serue him, bothe with their bodies and goodes. Yea he hath their wyues and children ready to declare their good willes towards him. Moreover this place teacheth vs, that Christians ought to assigne and appoint all they haue to the worshipping of God, & also to be carefull, that not only themselues be curteous and kind towards the seruantes of Chryst, but also to trayne bp their families in the perfozmaunce of lyke dueties. Paule in another place requireth the same in the widow chosen for Church affairs. And that which is becōmeth widows to do, may with more right be required of others to doo. But O detestable slouth of our daies, wherein diuers householders so bring bp their families, that they

teache

teache them rather howe to molest straungers, to contemne and hate them, than duetifully to fauoure and make of them. Let suche remember what hapned to the children, that bpbraided Helizeus with his baldnesse, whome the scripture sayth, were woozried with Beares.

Last of all, the bzethren of Tyre kneele downe vpon the shore, and pray. Where againe we see, howe prayer is commended vnto vs, whereof then there is mooste neede, when publike and waightie affaires are in hande. But bicause wee haue otherwheres intreated heereof, lette vs onely heere marke, howe they kneele openly vpon the sea shore, which could not bee but in the sight of all men, who perhappes derided suche kinde of religion. But they which are truely grafted in Christ, are ashamed neither of their faith, nor of their religion. For they knowe what glory remaineth for them, which confesse Christ before this so adulterous and naughtie a world. Would to God wee would well remember the same, and shake off that execrable cowardlynnesse and feare, which we vse now a dayes in euery thing, playing bopepe like dissemblers, to purchase vs the fauour of men.

Fourthly and finally, Paule with his company arriue at Ptolemais, where agayne he made one dayes abode with the bzethren. Therefore it appeareth there was a Church erected in that place also. And surely it is worthy to be diligently considered, howe the doctrine of the Gospell in the space of so fewe yeres, spredde so farre and wyde, that it established so many Congregations. For if a man consider the order of the story, it seemeth these things happened about the. xxiij. yere after Pauls conuersion. Therefore in the space of. xxiij. yeres the voyce of the Gospell was hearde throughout Asia and Europa, and euery where left behinde it most plentyfull fruite and increase. So wee reade in tymes past the Prophets toide and foreshewed it should bee. These things declare howe happily suche things proceede as are taken in hande by Gods appoyntmente, howsoever the worlde wasseleth agaynst Gods purpose and counsell. They are fooles therefore that feare the threates and enterprises of the worlde. Let vs meditate and thinke of these things in these dayes, and being armed with constant fayth, let vs labour to set forth the kingdom of Iesus Christ. To him be prayse, honoz, power and glory, for euer. Amen.

2. Reg. 2.

The Tyrians pray in open sight.

Mark. 8.

The moste happy course of the Gospell.

The. Cxxxviij. Homelie.

THE nexte day wee that were of Pauls company departed, and came vnto Coesarea. And wee entered into the house of Philippe the Euangeliste, whiche was one of the seauen, and abode with hym. The same man hadde foure daughters virgins, whiche dyd prophesie. And as wee tarried there a good many of dayes, there came a certayne prophete from Iury, named Agabus, when hee was come vnto vs, hee tooke Pauls gyrdle, and bounde hys feete and hys handes, and sayde: Thus saythe the holy Ghoste: So shall the Iewes at Hierusalem bynde the manne that oweth this gyrdle, and shall deliuer him

LIII. ij.

into

into the hands of the Gentiles. When we hearde this, both we and other which were of the same place, besought him that he would not goe vp to Hierusalem. Then Paule answered and sayd: what do you weeping and vexing mine heart? I am ready not to be bounde onely, but also to die at Hierusalem, for the name of the Lorde Iesu. When we could not turne his minde, we ceased, laying: the will of the Lorde be fulfilled. After those dayes we toke vp our burthens and went vppe to Hierusalem. There went with vs also certaine of the Disciples of Coesarea, and broughte with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an olde Dysciple, with whome we shoulde lodge. And when we were come to Hierusalem, the brethren receyued vs gladly.



It pleased God that Luke shoulde most diligently describe howe he would haue the Gospell of his sonne Iesus Chryste to be commended and set oute by Paules emprisonment and captiuitie, in so muche that Paule hastened and hied him to the same. Heereby he ment to lay before all men, a president of stedfaste sayth and obedience to follow. For we haue hitherto heard howe Paule hastened to Ierusalem, one whyle by sea, an other whyle by lande, and that through manyfolde dangers and perill, where he knew he shoulde be apprehended, and would not regarde any warnings of the Prophetes, dehoyting him from that, wherunto he knew he was called of God. And Luke prosecuting the Hystorie begonne, declareth now what he dyd at Coesarea, which was the laste place that Paule made any abode in, and then at length howe he came to Ierusalem.

He begynneth the thinges doone at Coesarea, with the description of their Hoste, which was Philippe, one of the seuen that were appoynted by the primatiue Church to haue the administration and distribution of the Church goods among the poore, as we heard before in the sixth Chapter. For the Church at Ierusalem being miserably disperced by reason of the persecution there raging, wherein Paule shewed him selfe to be very cruell, Philippe came to Samaria, and there sowed the seede of Gods worde. And there he now had his dwelling, and seemeth to haue bene the Minister or Byschoppe of that Church, which Chryst had there. And this is one of Gods rare iudgements, that Paule shoulde now haue him to be his hoste, whome before time he had caused to forsake Ierusalem, and that which he there had. Howebeit in Philippe, Saint Luke setteth out to vs a notable example of a sincere and an vnfayned Shepheard, in fewe words compysing all that Paule requirerh in a Bishop, in the first to Timothe the third Chapter, and in the first to Titus. For first he sayth, he was an Euangelist he was therefore one meete and apte to teach, which is the first and most necessarie qualitie of a Minister. And the degree or office of the Euangelists was a meane betweene the Apostles and Pastours, as may appeare by Paule. For they made their abode in certayne places, yet not being so tyed vnto them but that if necessitie so required, they might repaire to places adioyning, and further off. Their name admonished them of their duetie and office,

which

Philip, is a
president of
an Euan-
gelike shep-
heard.

first, an
Euangelist.

Ephes. 4.

which as touching doctrine, was all one with the Apostles and Pastours, that is to say, to preach the gospel, and to enfourme men in the doctrine thereof. For Chryst would not haue it free for the Apostles to teache what they listed, but commaunded them to preache the Doctrine which he had taught them, which onely in these dayes also ought to bee taught in the congregation. Furthermore, Philip had an house and substance, able to suffice both his owne neede, and also to harbour others in, which thing Paule also requireth in a Minister. For he receyueth Paule & a great companie that come with him, and entertayneth them curteously for a certayne dayes space, which hee could not haue done without some costes and charges. Therefore he was no begger, or vagabunde. Such as many malapert Comptrollers of the Ecclesiasticall function, would haue Ministers in these dayes to bee, who are eyther bewitched with enuie, or deceyued with ignorance, not being able to make a difference betwene the Apostles and the Pastours. And it is like he was very harborous, which was able to entertaine Paule and his company so curteously, which Paule had bene the cause of his exilement, as we declared a little before. Moreover, it is sayd he had Daughters. Ergo, a wife also, vntlesse (which were a wicked imagination) we will say he was an Whoozemonger, which yet perhaps the maintainers of filthie single lyfe that Poperie hath brought into the Church, would better like and beare with. They are conuined both by this, and the example of other Apostles, which Paule plainly confesseth carried their wiues aboute with them. 1. Corinthy. ix. The same Paule appointeth a Byshoppe or Minister to be the husband of one wife, that is to say, to be knit together in lawfull wedlocke, according to Gods first institution. And it is a most vaine glose of them, which thinke the ministerie is polluted by Matrimoine, and the companie of a wife, whereas it is euident it was instituted by God, and is in it self holie and vndefiled. Therefore Paule truly calleth it a doctrine of the Diuel, that forbiddeth the vse of marriage, because it is the proprietie of the Diuel, to call Gods institutions either vncleane, vnprofitable, or pernitious. See the first of Timothe the fourth Chapter. And the frutes of Popes single life, doe notably set forth the aucthor of this doctrine. Whereas it is manifest that heereof bleth to spring many times, whozedomes, adulteries, incests, and that horrible vice of Sodomie. Last of al, is declared what qualited persons Philips Daughters were, namely damosels indued with the gifte of Propheying. We know, that this worde Propheying, signifieth many times the declaration of Gods worde and the holy scripture. For so Paule saith that they that expound the scriptures in the Church, & refer and direct all their sayings and doings to the edification, instruction, and consolation of the Church, doe Prophecie. 1. Cor. 14. He calleth those women Prophetesses, that sit in the Church and heare the woord of God, whome he commaundeth to sit couered on their heades in the Temple. But where as Lukes meaning was, to declare that Philips Daughters had rare and singular giftes, this Propheying is to be vnderstanded of a peculiere gift and vertue of the holy Ghost, wherewith God had endowed them. For what neede was it, to haue noted that which al Christian women had indifferently, learned and vnlarned, every age and sexe? And I pray you, who would haue iudged the children of so faithfull an Euangelist, to haue

Secondly,
Harborous.

Thirdly,
Married.

1. Timot 3

Hebr. 13

Fourthly,
Philippes
Daughters
were Pro-
phetesses.
1. Cor. 14

1. Cor. 11

1. Timot 3

Agabus telleth Paule howe hee shoulde bee bounde and imprisoned.

Paules companions dissuade him from going to Ierusalem.

Math. 16

Paules constancie.

bene other than desirous of Gods word: But here is to be understood a singular gift of Prophecie, wherewith God ment to adourne womankind also, in the time of Christ, according to the Prophecie of Iock, that men might be the more attent to heare the word of God, and that it might appeare, that the merite of Christ appertained vnto women, aswell as to them. In the meane season, it is manifest, that Philip had a speciall care of the education and bringing vp of his children, which according to Pauls doctrine, is a thing very necessary both for publike example sake, and also for that it is scarce credible, that he can well rule the congregation, that is not able to gouerne his owne house. And the example of Hely the priest declareth how God is offended with the Ministers of the Church, which vse not to hidle the vntowardnesse and wantonnesse of their children seuerely. Read the first of Samuel. 2. 3. 4. Chapters.

Moreover while Paule abode with Philip, a certaine Propheete, whose name was Agabus came from Hierusalem or Iewrie, which warned him againe of the imprisonment towards him, and that not only by words, but also by gestures and signes after the manner of the auncient Prophetes, therby laying the thing, as it were before his eyes. For with Pauls girdle, he bindeth his owne handes and feete, adding an exposition and declaration of his so doing, saying: the Iewes shall bind the man which oweth this girdle at Ierusalem, on this wise. God therefore would haue Paule oftentimes admonished heereof, partly for that his faith and constancie might appeare the more, and partly for that we might learne by this example, that present daungers be not alwayes sufficient causes for vs to flie, bicause God foretelleth them sometimes, not to the ende we should shunne and auoide them, but to prepare vs to the vndertaking and suffering of them.

And heere is principally to be considered, both what Paule, and also his Companions did, in this present and eident perill. Whereof the one parte wepte, and desired him with teares, that hee would not goe bp to Ierusalem, as may bee gathered by Pauls wordes. And surely they could not want reasons to persuaade him heereunto. For bothe he seemed to tempte God, and also to hazarde not onely him selfe, but also to neglect the welfare of the Church, whome by this meane he bereeued of his seruice and Ministerie. But this is a zeale, commendable in deede, but not according to knowledge, suche as Christ Charpely reprehended in Peter, when he also dissuaded him from bearing the Crosse, yet their affection is to be praised, in that they are carefull for Pauls safetie, being farre vnlike to menne in these dayes, which bring Ministers in daunger wythout a cause, and thinke that they haue well discharged their dueties, if they can for a time redeme a worldly peace, with the liues and bloud of the Ministers. But Paule moste earnestly withstandeth them, and complayneth of them, saying: they greeue him more with their weeping, than with the remembrance of the daunger. Therefore Paule was not stony hearted, such an one as the Stoikes faine their good and blissefull man to be: but he confesseth plainely that Goddes calling is more deare vnto him, than his life and body. The holy Ghost letteth his Example before all Ministers, yea before all Christians, to bee followed. For vnlasse wee bee of the same mynde, wee shall little or nothyng profytte in the waye of Christe, bicause

bicaule Daungers are at hande on euery syde to them that seeke to serue Chryst. And this is no grieuous thing to the true godly, if they wel wey the matter: for what more profitable losse can we haue of this transitorie life and body, which shall in few moneths mouldre into dust, than to giue it for Chrystes sake, whome we know died and rose againe for this ende, that whether we liue or die, we haue him to our Lord and Protectoure? Which is the cause that Christ biddeth vs we should not feare the which are able to kill the body, but yet haue no power vpon the soule, which is the better part of man. And vnto these reasons do Paules companions also giue place. For seeing him so constantly to persist in his purpose, they say: The will of God be fulfilled. So now they perceiue at length, that he is instigated hereunto by the calling of God. Therfore least they might seeme to striue against God, they commit them selues, and the whole businesse vnto him, following bothe the example and commaundement of Christ. And surely there is no more safe haven, for the godly to get them selues into, amidde the raging and horrible tempests of these dayes, than the will of God. Which bicause it is holy and wholesome, is able most effectually to recreate and cheare the mindes that are tossed with troubles and cares, with the consideration therof. Let vs therfore after the example of these men, haue a regarde onely vnto the same, and courageously suffer what so euer God layeth vpon vs, who for that he is faithfull, wil not suffer vs to be tempted aboue our strength, but euen in the middle of temptation, wil make a way, that we shall be able to beare it.

Nowe followeth Paules arriual at Ierusalem, where we haue three things to be considered. First his frendes accompanie him which hitherto had bene his companions: and vnto these are added newe frendes gotten at Casaria. In which place the truth of God appeareth, which bleth to ioyne frendes and companions to them that suffer daunger for his names sake, as otherwheres we haue declared. Furthermoze in them appeareth a notable example of faith and constancie. For they were not ignorant what was like to happen vnto Saule. And there was greete cause for their owne parte also to be afraide. Yet they forsake him not, whome they knewe maintained Chrystes quarrell, nor would not be driuen from him by any waues, and sourses of aduersitie. Let suche marke this Example, as are pot frendes, and as long as fortune laugheth, will be companions with men, but if the begin once to lowre, they forget all friendship and benefites, and turne their backs. The second is, how the faithfull there, prouide Paule of a commodious lodging. For althoughe daungers were toward him, yet prudence must be ioyned with religion, as Christ teacheth, who in daungers wil haue vs to be wise, as serpents. His hoste was one Mnason, a Cypriote bozne, and an olde disciple or protestant, whereby is noted the perseuerance and continuance he was of, in the faith. And charitie accompanieth faith, whereof this was a notable argument, that he would lodge Paule and his companions, knowing what daunger they were like to be in. This is the propertie of true faith, that the nigher daunger approacheth, and the moze vehemently it bigeth, the brighter it shineth. Therefore our coldnesse is very worthy to be blamed, which in daungers dissemble our faith, and plainly neglect the due tie of charitie. Last of all the brethren at Ierusalem do gladly receiue Paule,

2. Tim 3

Rom 14

Math 10

1. Cor. 10

An exaple
of faithfull
frendes.Mnason,
Paules host.
Math. 10Charitie is
not suspiti-
ous.

yet hereafter we shall heare what euill rumors they spread of him. But thy brethren would not condemne him without hearing of his cause. They are most worthy to be folowed, and teach vs by their example, that we rashly beleue not such as ill report the brethren. For such as these for the most parte, are the chosen instrumentes of the Deuill, which knoweth that the Church can no way be more greuously disturbed, than by the deuision of the brethren. Let vs therefore be mindfull of charitie, which of all things abhorreth suspitiousnesse, and let vs wholly apply our selues to keepe the vnitie of the Church vnblemished, in Iesus Christ our sauour, to whome be praise, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The. Cxxxix. Homelie.

ANd on the morrow Paule went in with vs vnto Iames. And all the Elders came together. And when he had saluted them, he told by order all things, that God had wrought among the Gentiles by his Ministracion. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said vnto him: thou seest brother how many thousand Iewes there are which beleue, and they are all earnest followers ouer the law. And they are enfourmed of thee, that thou teachest all the Iewes, which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, and sayest, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neyther to liue after the customes. What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together: for they shall hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee. We haue four men which haue a vow on them. The take, & purifie thy selfe with them, and do cost on them, that they may shauie their heads, and all shall knowe that those things which they haue heard concerning thee, are nothing, but that thou thy selfe also walkest, and keepest the law. But as touching the Gentiles which beleue, we haue written and concluded, that they obserue no such thing, saue only that they keepe them selues, from things offred to Idolles, and from bloud, and from strangled, and from fornication.



Although many false rumors were spread of Paule the Apostle, that chosen vessel of Iesus Christ, whereby bothe his good name and doctrine was greuously stained and impeached by his aduersaries, yet Luke writeth that the brethren at Ierusalem, did frendly and courteously receyue him, thereby teaching vs, that they had a more regarde of charitie, than of a few of persones boyling in hatred, and he setteth out to vs, their example for every man to followe, which if we do not, all charitie amongst men shall soone be disturbed. It followeth in this present historie, what Paule and the brethren at Ierusalem did. Which place for many skilles, that may serue for our instruction, is very worthy of diligent attention and consideration.

First and forme, Paule and his companions gette them vnto Iames.

which

which at this time was resident in the Citie, and there in the hearing of the Elders, he declared what things he had done, repeating in order, eche thing that God vntill that time, had wrought by his Ministerie. Where we are first taught that order is a necessary thing in the Church, and that euery one must not entremedde in euery thing. Paule was an elect vessell of Christ, and laboured more than all the other Apostles, yet of his priuate auctoritie, he attempteth nothing in an other mannes Church, but before he set on any thing, he first goeth to the Superintenders and Ministers of the Church, and reuerently saluteth them, and then proceedeth to the narration of his doings. This one example is sufficient, to conuince the pride of the Romane Bishops, which challenge to them selfe a supremacye and Lordship ouer all Churches. The troublesome Anabaptistes also are confuted by the same, who althoughe they no where plant any Churches, yet vse they to disturbe the Churches planted by the labourers and traualles of others, hereby attributing to them selues singular commendation, when they can by their franticke and faueltue chatterie, molest and trouble the godly Ministers, and bring them in hatred and contempt with euery man. Furthermore in this thing also Pauls modestie singularly appeareth, in that he maketh God the author of all things, in the discourse of his doings, and attributeth nothing to him selfe, but the Ministerie only. For he knew that men planted and watered but in vaine, onlesse God gaue the increase. So in another place, when he had said, he had labored more than all the other Apostles, he by and by addeth: yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me. This thing we haue elsewhere declared, must be obserued in all manner of vocations. For except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it. Excepte God prosper and fauoure common weales, the cares and counsels of the Magistrates are but in vaine. Excepte by his spirit he worke with our studies, and sharpen the edge of our witte, all our reading and wytyng profiteth not. Let vs therfore be mindefull heereof, and learne to haue a lowly conceite of our selues, with our studies intermeddle continuall prayers, whereby God will be sued vnto, and haue his giftes obtained.

Furthermore, of the Elders it is saide, that when they hadde heard Pauls traualles, they glorified the Lord. This is a rare example of loue, that they eniue not at the praise of their fellow Minister, and murmur not churlishly at it, as commonly they doe, which being boide of all charitie, are more desirous of their owne glory, than of Gods. For as Paule made God the author of the things which he had so commendably done, so they also tickle not Paule with counterfet prayles, but reioysing in his doings, glue the glory vnto God. They teache vs by their example, how to iudge of the laboures and vertues of Saintes. We must know that they were men, subiect to humane affections, and casualties. If therfore they haue done any thing passing mannes power or habilitie, we may know it was the working of God, who of merre fauor, did bouchase to vse their Ministerie. Let vs therfore reioyce in their felicitie, and followe them in yeelding our selues to be Goddes instrumentes, but let vs ascribe the whole praise of our doings vnto God. And we thus imitating them, shall truly honour them, and yet God shal haue his glory remain whole and sound, which those men wickedly violate, that cleaue vnto the Saintes, and

Paule goeth
to y elders
at Ierusalem.

1. Cor. 3

1. Cor. 15

Psalm, 127

The elders
go about to
free Paule
from hatred

The elders
go about to
free Paule
from hatred

Rom 3
Galath. 3

Rom. 7
1. Cor. 15
Galath. 3

The elders
oration of
talk.

make them authors and giuers of goodnesse, in such wise, that they aske helpe and succor of them in distresse. Looke before in the thirde and fourtieth Chapters.

Nowe followeth a notable Acte wherof these Elders of Ierusalem were the cheefe Counsellers. For they counsell him to take vpon him the bowe of a Nazarean; and that the time of his bowe being expired, he should according to the lawe, let him selfe be purified, or dismissed of his bowe, in the Temple: which thing gaue occasion to his wicked enemies, to take against him, and so to apprehend him, and cast him in prison. But because in this doing, there are things which after a sort are tollerable, and some by no meanes to be borne with, they are therefore the more diligently to be examined. Wherefore for the better vnderstanding of eche thing, we will more at large open this controuersie. Paule taught that men were iustified through the meere fauor of God, by faith in Iesus Christ, which doctrine the Apostles, we see allowed and approued with one consent in the xij. Chapter. But where Paule preaching among the Gentiles, had muche adoe with them, that went about to humble the lawe and gospel together, and would haue had the Gentiles brought to the obseruation of Circumcision, and such like Ceremonies: therefore it was necessary, that he should the more diligently intreat of the ende and vse of the lawe, and he was enforced in liuely wise, to open all things to the quicke. Wherefore he plainly taught, that the lawe and ceremonies therof helped nothing vnto iustification, because no man was able to satisfie the lawe, but that it was giuen to betray our corruption; and to bring vs being conuicted of sinne vnto Christ, in whome onely the fulfilling of the lawe was to be found. He further said, that by their opinion which attributed merite of iustification to the lawe, Christ was not auailable; and that such could not but be condemned, because they wittingly procured to them selues the curse of the lawe. Heereof sprang these kindes of locutions: The lawe worketh wrath: while the lawe endured, Sinne reuiued: The strength of Sinne is the lawe. As many as are of the deedes of the lawe, are subiecte to the curse. &c. These things seemed very vnpleasant to those, which were broughte vp in the lawe from their childehode, and knewe that God had appointed the same by Moses. And they that were Pauls enemies, tooke occasion heereof to slander him, saying hee was a prophane contemptuer of the lawe, as though he simplie and without respect, disallowed the same: where as he improued not the lawe, but them, who inuented a new ende and vse of the lawe, and would haue men saued and iustified by the obseruation thereof. Therefore all men enuied Paule, even as in these dayes, we are called the enemies of good woorkes, when we say they are not auailable to iustifie and saue by, where yet we leaue them still their place, and teache that they be duties which all men must needes pay, and perfourme vnto God. Nowe these things being premised, it shal easely appeare what these Elders meant by their talke, and what marke they shotte at in their doing. Wherefore, wee will nowe biewe and examine all the partes of theyr saying.

First they plainly declare, that Pauls good name and fame was euell spoken of amongst al men. For they say: It is reported that thou teachest al men to forsake Moses &c. And this is to be muche commended in them.

that

that they dissemble nothing. For it is good to deale plainly with freendes and brethren, that if they haue offended, it may be amended, and that they may be iudged faultlesse, if they be wrongfully accused. And it is a great fault in them that will still accuse men, when they are absent, and flatter them when they are present. And they also are very faultie, which suffer other to backbite the brethren, and will not warne them, of whome they should beware. For so it cometh to passe, that slander breaketh friendship euery where, & a great many know not, what cheefely to beware of.

Also they counsell him to make his purgation openly, bringing diuers weightie reasons of that their counsell. For first they alleage the multitude of beleuers, all which had conceiued an euill opinion of him. For they say: thou seest brother, how many thousand Iewes there are which beleue, and they all are feruent followers of the lawe. And they expressly call them beleuers, least any man should thinke they would holde with obstinate and stubbe rne persons. And they say, there are many thousandes of them, declaring that the saluation of so many, is not a thing to be lightly regarded. And surely it is likely that Paule was cheefely moued with this reason, who was so carefull for his Countrymen, that he wished to be accused for their sakes. They alleage also their zeale to the lawe, to the ende it might appeare that they were as yet somewhat to be borne with, seeing violent remedies could little preuaile in such feruencie of zeale. Furthermore they reason of necessitie, saying: It must needs be that the multitude will come together. For where all men knowe thou art come, the matter can not be dissembled. Therefore it is needefull that thou purge thy selfe heereof. And whereas by words thou shalt little or nothing preuaile with them that are rooted in superstition, it is needefull that thou declare by some fact or other, that thou hast hitherto bene vniuersally reprehended. And these persuasions had bene of no final importance, if the cause had not ben suche, as might rather haue serued to confirme the superstitious in their error, than to win those that were obseruers of the lawe, as we shall by and by declare.

For now followeth the counsell, wherby they thinke Paule may maintaine and keepe his good name and fame, we haue foure menne (say they) which haue a vowe on them, that is to say, Nazareans, whereof we entreated in the eightene Chapter, out of the sixt Chapter of the booke of Numbers. Ioyne thy selfe vnto these men, and cause thy selfe openly to be shauen and purified with them according to the lawe. Which thing as it is easie to be done: so thereby it shall appeare vnto all men, that thou hast hitherto bene wrongfully suspected, and that thou oughtest to be taken for no despiser of the lawe, seeing thou obseruest the Ceremonies commaunded in the same. This is that Counsell of the Elders of the Congregation at Ierusalem, which outwardly might seeme tollerable, and the same that Paule before did at Cenchrea. But he that expendeth the thing very wel, shall perceiue a great difference betweene them, and that the Apostle ought not to haue yeilded to their deuise, seeing he had so earnestly maintained and defended the profession of faith and Christian libertie in other things of smaller importance. For first of all, he had bounde him selfe to the vowe of a Nazarite, among the Corinthians, because he knew he should winne thereby some weaklings, as he him selfe testifieth. And heereby

The counsell of the elders is discussed.

1. Cor. 9.

faith he suffered no detriment or damage; because the onely Chaunge of his head, deliuered him from his bowe. But here was required a Sacrifice, which now we had no more place left in the Church, for that the vail of the Temple was long before rent in the death of Christ, and all Sacrifices utterly abrogated. Again, the thing he did at Conchrea, was onely for the weakes sake, and could not be drawne to the Example and confirmation of the Ceremonies of the lawe. But the end of this fact was, that Paule should testifie, that he liked the whole lawe with all the Ceremonies thereof. Hereof what other thing could spring, but that the Iewes should be confirmed in their error, and they which had hitherto so profited in Christ, that they had renounced the law, should be called backe againe, to the obseruation thereof. Furthermore, if this had bene done in the first beginning of the Church, it might haue seemed iustly to haue bene done for the weakes sake. But seeing the Gospel had now ben preached euery where for two and twentie yeeres together, surely this was too great an indulgencie and bearing, whereby to confirme an obstinate people in their superstition. Yea God declared by his Iudgement, that he was displeased herewith. For to say nothing how unhappily this counsell fell out for Paule, God within fewe yeeres after, did utterly ouerthrow their Citie and Temple, the forge of all superstition, because they would not before, make an ende of their Leviticall Ceremonies. Therefore these Elders being deceiued through one muche loue they bare to their nation, counselled Paule hereunto, and Paule ouer easily yeelded vnto them, who ought rather to haue blessed the libertie which he shewed before in Titus cause, against Peter, Galath. ii. Therefore they are greatly deceiued, which by this Example, goe about to defend them, which thinke all things must be done, to winne mennes fauour by. We know this thing ought to haue place in suche matters as are not derogatorie to the confession and libertie of Christ. But where these things come in hazard, we must not swaue one nailles breadth from the way of truth. Wherefore the erreure of moste singular and holy men must not be taken for any Example, but must rather cause vs to be the warter, that we be not led awry by like erreure.

Furthermore, in the last parte, they preuent that which might be objected, touching the Gentiles. For Pauls example seemed to preiudice them, and to maintaine their opinion that went about to bring in Circumcision and other Ceremonies, among the Gentiles. This therefore they denie, saying: Touching the Gentiles which beleue, wee haue wrytten heretofore, exempting them from all obseruing of lawes Ceremoniall, so they abstaine from things that are plaine prophane, and in the vsing of their libertie, forgette not Charitie, and pollute not them selfe with the fellowship of Idolles, and Whoredome, and offende no man with the vnreasonable eating of strangled, or bloude, which is a thing bothe easie and profitable for them to abstain from. Read the fifteenth of the Acts touching these poyntes.

Here throughout all this doing appeareth the obstinacie of the Iewes, and howe small prerogatiue the dignitie of this world hath in matters of religion, seeing no where was founde greater infirmitie and weaknesse of faith in the Apostles time, than in the Church at Ierusalem;

which

which might iustly gloze, both in notableness of Citie, and in Chrystes sermons, and in the first frutes and springth of the Gospel. We are also taught, howe greatly those superstitious teachers of Ceremonies hinder the Gospel, which nourishe the weake in fayth with the long retayning of them, and with their bearing pill backe the more frequenter sorte of Ministers. Let vs therefore cast away suche weake shooes and proppes of this doubtfull & waivering flesh, and holde faste the beauty of fayth, and beeing mindefull of Christian libertie, let vs constantly magnifie the worth of that, which is the onely begotten sonne of God, Iesus Christe our Lord and Sautour, to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory, for ever. Amen.

The Cxl. Homely.

THEN the nexte day Paule took the men, and purified him selfe with them, and entred into the Temple, declaring that he observed the dayes of the purification, vntyll that an offering shoulde be offered for euery one of them. And when the seauen dayes were now almost ended, the Iewes which were of Asia, whom they sawe him in the Temple, moued all the people, and layde handes on him, saying, Men of Israell, helpe. This is the man that teacheth all men euery where agaynst the people and the Lawe, and thys place. He hath also brought Greekes into the Temple, and hath polluted this holy place. For they had scene with him one in the Citie, Prophimus an Ephesian, whom they suppoled that Paule had brought into the Temple. And all the Citie was moued, and the people swarmed together. And they tooke Paule, and drue him out of the Temple, and forthwith the doores were shutte. As they were about to kyl him, rydings came vnto the high Captayne of the Souldiours that al Hierusalem was moued. Which immediately toke Souldiours and vndercaptaynes, and ran downe vnto them. When they sawe the vndercaptayne and the Souldiours, they left smyting of Paule.

BECAUSE Paule the Apostle was euill spoken of among those of Ierusalem for his doctrine about the Law, as though he had simply and absolutely condemned it, with the preceptes and Ceremonies thereof, as a thing of it selfe euill and nought: the Elders of the Congregation councelled him howe he should cleare him selfe of all suche suspition. And verily it is a thing woorthy of prayse in them, that they are so carefull for such a mans good name, but yet to be disliked, that they giue such counsell as repugneth with the plaine profession of faith and christian libertie. For this teacheth vs, that the Ceremonies of the lawe and Leuitical worshipping, are by Chryll abrogated, and that therefore hencefoorth there is no more vse of them in religion. For why should they be accounted after Chrystes coming among those things that apertaine to the honoz of God, seeing that God in time past would not be worshipped by the, but ordeined the for figures of things to come, & of redemption which he had promised.

Paule taketh on him the bow of a Nazarite.

The holy Ghost setteth out this example, neither for vs to folow, neither to diminish the authoritie either of Paule, or the Elders, and cheefely of Iames, but for that we should learne to suspect the wisdom of the fleshe, in matters of saluation and religion, & not to swaure one nailes bredth, from the word of God. This shall the whole successe of the matter more fully declare, which now forthwith we shall cheefely consider. **Paul** obeyeth the counsell of the Elders, hauing no small occasion, to haue repossulated with them, that they had so long borne with manifest errorres and superstition. Yet he modestly and friendly proueth vnto them as well for that he would not seeme wayward and obstinate, as also for that he thought heereby to haue occasion with more freedom to teach the Iewes. Wherefore he goeth into the Temple with those foure men that had the bow on them, declareth openly the time when they would be purified, and procureth to haue a sacrifice offered for euery one of them. Now who seeth not heere a manifest errour: why doth he not, as he had before time doone, when he would beare neuer so little the dissimulation of Peter? Why had he no consideration of the Gentiles, which might be maruellously offended at this his dooing? Thinketh he there were no false brethren at Jerusalem, which woulde priuily espie out the libertie of the Christians? Therefore this example teacheth vs howe greatly men erre in Religion, when they take the wisdom of the fleshe ouer hastily to counsell. For Paule being deceyued heereby, recedeth from his former simplicitie, and layeth a stumbling blocke in the way of those Gentiles which beleued, and yet prouaileth neuer the more amongst the Iewes. For they who are not moued with the authoritie of Gods worde, a man shall in vayne go about to moue them with lenitie and counsell of the fleshe. Therefore it is the safest way for vs to acknowledge that all matters in Religion appertayne vnto god alone, and that we haue no authoritie ouer them. Thus shall it come to passe, that we shall take nothing vpon vs therein, but shall follow the worde of God onely, which he hath appoynted to be both a rule vnto vs of fayth and religion, and also of our whole life. *Looke Numer. 15. Deut. 4. and 12. Chapters.*

The successe of mans counsell is unhappy.

But let vs at length see, what was the ende of this facte and counsell. It seemeth at the beginning, that this businesse would well succede, by cause for sequen dayes together there appeared no daunger. But lo, when Paule thought the ende was at hande, and him selfe in safetie, troubles rise on euery side, so as he is in such perill of his lyfe, as he was neuer before in the like. For through the importunacie and naughtinesse of a fewe of persons, the whole Citie was in an uprore, and Paule being apprehended by certayne sedicious persons, had vndoubtedly perished, if the Captayne had not bene moued by the singular counsell of God, to come and rescue him out of the hands of such a raging sorte. But let vs peruse euery thing in order, that we may receiue the more instruction thereby.

The Iewes are the authors of this disturbance.

First it is declared that the Iewes which came out of Asia were the authors of all this tragedie. These are the same which we see many tymes before burned in hatred agaynst Paule, following and pursuing him into euery Citie. For he neuer suffered any persecution, but it was rayled by these men. In these persons may be seene the incurable blindness of that Nation, which Paule himselfe bewayleth in the first Epistle to the Thes-

salom-

salonians, the seconde Chapiter, which at length was greuously punished by the iuste iudgement of God. In the meane season make home paynefull and bolde hatred of the trueth maketh men to bee. For these fellows follow Paule into all places, and stirre vp sedition in a straunge Citie, which they well knew, could not be done without euident daunger. But would God we had not in our days the lyke examples euery where.

Moreouer hauing opportunitie therunto, they moue and set all the people a running, as it were to the quenching of some great fyre newly begunne. For they lay hands on Paule, and cry: Yee men of Israel, helpe. &c. What needed any helpe or succour agaynst him, that went about neyther secret sedition, nor playne force agaynst any man. You see therefore who they are that commonly be the authors of sedition. This fault most tymes is layde to the Ministers charge, as wee see euery where. But if wee waygh the matter well, wee shall see none other are the begynners hereof, but those that hate the Ministers, and be their enemies. For whereas they can not away with the light of trueth, if they can by none other meanes, they will extinguishe and put away the same with publike rufte, as Catiline once sayde. Referre heerebnto that that is sayde in the 14. 16. 17. 18. and 19. Chapters.

But bicause they woulde not seeme to make suche a doo without some cause they intermeddle with their sedicious clamours, certayne accusations. And firste they accuse his doctrine, as a thing preiudiciall to the people of God, to the Lawe, and to the Temple. This they seeme to gather hereof, bycause Paule to bridle the wayne affiaunce in the fathers, which his Countrey men had, declared that the true Israelites were not borne of the fleshe, but of the spirite, and that all they were not by and by to be accompted for the people of God, which were borne of Abraham, as for the fleshe, except they beleued in Christ, after the example of Abraham. Also, bicause in reasoning of the true vse of the lawe, he taught that iustification was not to be attributed therunto, as we sawe in the Sermon before going, and for that he sayd the Leviticall lawes were abolished, by the coming of Christ, and by the merite of his death. And least their accusation might seeme to consist but in bare wordes onely, they complaine them also of a fact by Paule newly committed, namely that he had brought Gentiles into the Temple, and by meane thereof, had polluted that holy place. But this was a moste false and slanderous reproche, yet founde it credite wyth all men, bycause they had seene one Trophimus an Ephesian in the Citie among Pauls companions. Thus they suspecte that he had brought him into the Church. Agayne this place teacheth vs, what thinges are commonly layde to the Ministers charge, euen that they wickedly sinne against the elect people of God, that they impudently condemne the lawes and traditions of the Church, and that they are the subverters of the Church, and of all auncient religion. Thus we reade Chrysie was accused. And euen the same did the enemies of trueth, lay vnto Stephens charge. And the very same doo certayne persons in these dayes obiecte agaynst vs also: who are moued no whit, neither with the respect of Gods Church, nor with the authoritie of Gods Lawe, nor yet wyth any care or desire of true Religion. Yet suche is the happe of trueth, that none is more impudently and effectuously slandered, than his Ministers.

2. Sedition is raysed.

3. The articles & points wherof Paul is accused.

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4. Paule is
in hazarde
of his life.

John 8. 12.
I am the light of the
world: whoso followeth
me shall not walk in
darknes.

God sent
deth one to
deliuer
Paule.

Iere. 39.
and 40.

For where they are enuied of the worlde, and condemned aforehande in all mens iudgements, moste men easily admitte and receiue any thing agaynst them, and no man is ashamed of his lightnesse in so dooing. But let vs patiently beare that which we know not onely the Prophets and Apostles suffered, but euen the sonne of God also.

Moreouer being not contented to haue apprehended the man, & to lode him with false accusations, they vse plaine force against him. For they draw him out of the Temple, they lay hypon him and beate him without ceasing, yea they goe about in shamefull wise to kill him, yet first shutting the Church gates, bicause they would haue the Temple by no meanes polluted. Which example teacheth vs, howe farre impietie, and hatred of Gods word proceedeth. For although it lieth long hidden, yet when occasion serueth, it will burste forth, and it thirsteth for nothing, but the blood of the Ministers, which onely is that thing, that assuageth and satisfieth them. The examples heereof are more abundant euery where than neede any long declaration. First and formost marke I pray you, the singular sanctimonie of these men, which will seeme to fight for God and his religion. For they haue great care, that they pollute not the Church with blood, and therefore they shut the doores. But in the meane while they feare not to embzue their hands and their selues in innocent blood. Suche lyke things as these Chyrst bpbaydeth them with in the Gospel, where he sayth they strayne at a Gnat, and swalowe downe a Camel. So the Priestes would not goe into the Iudgement hall, because they would not prophane their feast day, but they could deliuer an Innocent unto Pylate, and with all maner of vnrightheadnesse and importunary requite his blood. But how this hypocrisie and dissimulation pleased God, appeareth hereby, that not many yeres after he caused the Romanes to destroy those bloody hypocrites, with their Temple and vngacious citie.

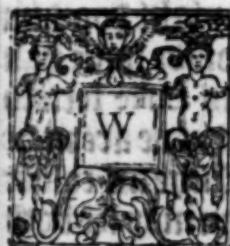
Howbeit God sayleth not his Apostle, beeing in this daunger, who when he thought he was utterly caste off, sent him a deliuerer and reuenger, which he neuer hoped or looked for. For the Captayne moued with the clamour of the Commons, and with the rumoz of a sedition, was straight way at hande with a garrison of souldiers and taketh Paule out of the handes of these harebrayned Commons. And heere he played the parte of a good Magistrate, which thing those men haue a slender consideration of, that suffer harmlesse persons to be oppressed with the violence of desperate people. Here haste thou to consider the truth and fatherly care of God, which alwayes preferueth those that be his, althoughe sometowiles he seemeth little to regarde them. And it is no great matter for him to deliuer them, forasmuche as he is able to bring it to passe, euen by those which are straungers from the fayth and religion. For in this place Paule is defended by the Romane souldiers. And it appeareth that Ieremie in tyme past was preferued by Nabuzardes, the publike enemie of Gods people. Many lyke examples might be brought, the ende of all which is, that we should not dispaire in tyme of the crosse and tribulation, nor flye to vnlawfull meanes of remedie, but put all our care and trust in God, and wayte for his helpe and succour, which Paule at this tyme syn- deth to be moste effectuell and ready. For the sedicious, whome neither feare of God, nor shame of man could stay or holde backe, as soone as they

elped

espied the Captayne and Souldiers, helde their handes, and ceased smiting of Paule. This is the propertie of all the wicked, that they are more stayed with the feare of men, than of God, and therefore the Magistrate or officer is necessarie to hydle and keepe vnder suche vnruly fellowes. Let vs therefore lye within the feare of God, and directe al our dooings after his holy will, who is able not onely to deliuer vs out of the hands of the wicked, but also from the iawes of Hell and death, through hys sonne Iesus Chrest our Lorde, to whom be blessings, honour, power and glory, nowe and euer. Amen.

The Cxlj. Homelie.

Then the Captayne came neere, and tooke him, and commaunded him to be bounde with two chaynes, and demaunded what he was, and what he had doone. And some cryed one thing, some another among the people. And when he coude not knowe the certayntie for the rage, he commaunded him to be carried into the Castle. And when he came vnto a Stayre, it fortuneth that he was borne of the Souldiours, for the violence of the people. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying away with him. And when Paule beganne to be carryed into the Castle, he sayde vnto the high Captayne. May I speake vnto thee? Which sayde: Canst thou speake Greeke? Arte not thou that Egyptian, which before these dayes madest an vproare, and leddest out into the wildernesse foure thousande men, that were murtherers? But Paule sayde: I am a man which am a Iewe of Tharsus, a Citie in Cicill, a Ciizen of no vile Citie. I beseeche thee suffer mee to speake vnto the people. And when he had giuen him lycence, Paule stood on the steppes, and beckened with his hande vnto the people: and when there was made a great sylence, he spake vnto them in the Hebrue tongue, saying,



Here Dauid a man after Gods owne mynde sayth: Many are the tribulations of the iuste, and the Lorde deliuereth them out of all. The same appeareth in this hystorie to be moste truly sayde. For we haue here howe Paule was taken by the furious multitude of the Jewes, howe he was buffeted and beaten, howe he was lyke to be killed among them, which burning in cankred hatred agaynst him, thyrtled for nothing so muche as his bloud. But lo, on the sodayne God rayseth vp for hym a defender, and deliuereth his Apostle by those which were strangers from the fayth and religion of God. But where we haue in the laste Sermon entreated of the vse and ende heereof, wee will nowe examine the hystorie of hys deliuerie, which Luke moste exactly describeth, with all the circumstances thereof.

First he declareth what the Captaine of the souldiers did. He first of all taketh Paule out of their raging handes, and commaundeth to bynde hym with two chaynes, this doth he not of any head, or ouercome with hasti-

Paule is bound in chaynes.

nelle of anger, bicause al his dooing declareth manyfest tokens of a moderate meaning. But he doth it partely for that he thought he was some euill man, seeing euery body so earnestly set agaynst him, and partly for that he perceiued he could pacify the furious people no way more commodiously, than by making them beleue, that he should shortly be punished, according to his deserts. In the meane season beeing mindfull of his dutie, he diligently enquireth what he is, and what he had done. For this is the dutie of a Magistrate, to do nothing rashly, or vpon heade. For if he haue once iniuried him, whom he ought to haue defended, then is there no excuse lefte for him. Therfore Moyses commaundeth the Judges to heare both the small and the great, yea and to searche out the circumstances of all matters, that they offende not, either through ignorance, or blinde affection of the flesh. In the meane whyle we haue heere diligently to consider the maner of this deliuerie. Paule is deliuered out of the present perill of his lyfe, which the Jewes put him in, yet is he bounde with two chaynes, as though he were some greuous malefactor. Howbeit God had ben able at once to haue set him cleane at libertie: which thing bycause he doth not, it is certayne that these chaynes were for Paules commoditie, and that his captiuitie serued the more to set oute Chrystes kingdome. And this is alwayes Gods continuall custome, vsing in this sorte to moderate his benefites, specially when he perceiueth wee haue neede to be kepte vnder and bydeled. This we finde true many times in sicknesse, and in other tribulations, wherein it becommeth vs patiently to suffer whatsoeuer God sendeth, forasmuche as bothe his will is good, and wee can not be exempte or secluded from the care and protection of his diuine prouidence by any aduersitie.

A descriptio
of sedition.

Hypocrites
are more
cruell than
the souldi-
ours.

But what do the people in the meane season? First they fill the eares of all men with vncertayne and confused noise, so that nothing coulde bee certaynely knowen or perceyued, which is a thing commonly vled in seditions, as hath bene sayde in the. xix. Chapter. Next, when the Captayne had commaunded him to be bounde, and to bee brought into the Castle, meaning there to heare the matter, they all follow most impudently after, and pzeace vpon him with suche violence, that the souldiours are fayne to carry him on their armes and neckes, for feare the Rebels might doo him some harme. At length they agree all in this, that they woulde haue him put to death and made out of the way. In which things, as Luke setteth out to vs a lively image of sedition: so he teacheth vs, that none are more greuous enemies of the truthe and of the godly, than suche as colour their enterprises with a zeale of godlynesse. For here a man may see both more equitie & humanitie in the barbarous souldiers, than in the Jewes, which would seme to fight for the Temple and for their religion. For they would haue killed him without hearing his cause, whome the Captayne made diligent inquirie of. They trouble & disturbe all thing with shouting and crying, where the Captayne dothe all thing peaceably and in quiet. These men impudently treade on him, whom the souldiours vouchsafe to carry on their shoulders. What needeth many wordes, they would neither haue the truthe enquired, nor the cause tryed, but would haue him forthwith made out of the way, to feede their wicked eyes with the sight of an Innocentes blood. We reade how the lyke fell out in Chrystes passion.

For

For there was more equitie in Pylate and Herode, than in the Priestes, and Scribes. And the Priestes scorned him hanging on the crosse, whom the barbarous Souldiours testified to bee an Innocent, bycause of the wonders that they sawe. There wante not examples in these dayes, considering it appeareth, that many bycause of their confession of the truth, are more iustly and gently entreated of Turkes, than of the Byshoppes and Monkes, which will seeme to bee enflamed with the zeale of godlynesse. But this is the lively portraiture of the diuell cruelly raging vnder the cloke of godlynesse. Wee are taught by these examples, that they are not to bee excused which wrong the faythfull of Chryst vnder a pretence of suche a zeale. For this Chryste prophesied long agoe should come to passe. And it is euident that Paule burned in the zeale of the Jewes law when he persecuted the Church. But for this cause he confesseth him selfe to be the chiefest and gretest sinner of all other. For God will not haue vs ledde with our owne zeale, but requireth of vs knowledge, that when we haue learned to vnderstande his worde, we should do that he prescribeth and commaundeth. Looke the .xv. chapter of Numbers.

But let vs returne vnto Paule, and see what he dothe, beeing compased about wyth so many daungers. Luke reporteth one thing of him, whereby we may iudge bothe of his inuincible steadynesse of fayth, and of hys coragious minde. For in that furie and rage of the people, and confused clamour and shouting, he meditateth an excuse, partly for that he was very desirous of hys Countreymens vtilitie, and woulde sayne haue broughte them vnto good, and partely for that he woulde free Chrystes quarell of all suspition, beeing appoynted a Minister thereof. And this example of Paule is to be followed of all Ministers in their priuate daungers, diligently to seeke bothe the saluation of others, and the glozy of Chryste. But it all be good to consider diligently all the partes of this businesse. First, he rusheth not out after any rash sort to speake, as sedicious persons ble to do, but asketh leaue first of the Captaine after a modest and reuerent wise. And he setteth him not light, bicause he was a souldier, but rather worshipping him bicause of his authority & office. By which example both the Popes and Anabaptistes are confuted, wherof the one simply condemne all Magistrates, & the other set them to kisse their fete, yea they wickedly set their fete vpon them. Moreouer the Captaine, although he suppose him to be a murtherer, answereth him frendly, & demandeth whether he be not that Egyptian, which not many days befoze had raysed by the people to rebel, & with his scatteded coplices robbed men in euery place as they went. For it was meet that they which wold not embrace the true Messias, should be deluded by deceiuers, as we haue elsewhere shewed. The example of the captaine teacheth vs to deale curteously with captiues. For where the end of imprisonment, is to brydle & keepe vnder malefactoris, for feare of doing hurt, & for an example vnto others, it were discourtesie and vniust to passe these bounds by crueltie against him, whom we ought rather for humanities sake to haue pitie of. Agayne we see in the captaynes demaunde what horrible crymes God suffreth his seruants to be suspected & charged with. and yet vsesh he to deliuer them out of all. Wherfore there is no cause why they should dismay vs, but rather that we should follow Paule, who beeing nothing offended with this vnseemely demaund,

Timo 1.

Paule meditateth how to excuse him selfe.

See Iosephus in the 4. booke, and 4. chapter of the Jewes warres.

Psa 34.

declareth modestly and frendly what he is, and by reason of his modestie (God so disposing the matter) obteyneth leaue of the Captayne to say his minde. But if a man woulde compare this Captayne with the Monkes of our dayes, and the Inquisitors of Heresie, which cause the tongues of Martyres to be pulled out, bycause they shall not speake to the people, as they goe to execution, it shall easily appeare, howe much more wycked and cruell they bee, than hee was. But as sodne as Paule had gotten leaue of the Captayne to speake, strayght way hee beckened wyth hys hande to the people, and obteyneth silence of them also, and maketh a diligent Oration to them out of hande, which was no small token of a ready mynde and witte.

There is to bee considered bothe the power and truthe of God. Hys power appeareth in this, that hee was in a momente able to calme and pacifie the myndes of the raging people, to giue eare vnto hym, whose death euen now they so desired. Of hys truthe thys is a manifeste argument, that hee is not amased with all that shouting and buffeting, but hath his wittes and vtterance at will, to declare hys cause boldly and artificially befoze his moste cruell enemies. Thus is that saying of Chryst fulfilled: Euen in the same houre shall it be giuen vnto you what to speake. &c. Compare with our Paule beeing in chaynes, Cicero the father of the Romane eloquence, and thou shalt perceiue how much the spirite of Chryst passeth all industrie of mans wit, and long exercise of pleasing. For he long agoe beeing broughte in his Litter into the Hall, to pleate Milo his cause, when he sawe Pompeyes garde and harnesse glittering in euery place of the hall, could scarce for feare once open his mouth to speake. But Paule beeing bound in chaynes, and feeling the ache of hys late bobbes and buffers, among the weapons and armor of the souldiours, the Captayne standing by, pleateth for his life with constanthe minde and mouth, beeing encouraged with the spirite of Chryste, which he promised to his electe to be their Aduocate and comforter. Let vs lykewise be emboldened with the meditation of the same, that wee may without feare pleate the cause of saluation and fayth, befoze this world: for he in whom wee haue beleued, will not leaue vs destitute, neither of his spirite nor fauor, which is our Lorde and sauour Iesus Chryst, to whom be prayse, honour power and glory, for euer. Amen.

Math. 10.
Mark. 13.
A comparison
betwene
Paule and
Cicero.

The. xxij. Chapter vpon the *Actes of the Apostles.*

The. Cxlij. Homelie.

MEn, brethren, and Fathers, heare yee mine answer which I make now vnto you. When they hard that he spake in the Hebrue tong to them, they kept the more silence. And he saithe: I am verily a man which am a

Iewe,

Iewe, borne in Tharsus a Citie in Cycil, neuerthelesse yet brought vp in this Citie, at the feete of Gamaliel, and inſourmed diligently in the lawe of the Fathers, and was ſeruent minded to Godward, as yce all are this ſame day: and I perſecuted this way vnto the death, bynding and deliuering in to priſon both men and women, as the chiefe Prieste dothe beare me witneſſe, and all the ſtate of the Elders: of whom alſo I receiued Letters vnto the brethren, and went to Damasco to bring them which were ther bound to Ieruſalem for to bee puniſhed.



Although our Saviour Iesus Christ would haue his Diſciples to be patient in bearing ſlaunders and reproches. Yet that letteth not but they may bothe openly and boldly proteſt, and defend their innocencie. Yea many times neceſſity conſtraineth them ſo to do, leaſt by their meanes, Christ and the Chriſtian faith be euill reported. This dothe Paule therefore in this place prudently conſider. We heard how the Iewes accuſed him for a common enimie of gods people, of his law and his Temple. Be-

ſides this, the Captaine ſuſpected he was an Egyptian, and Captaine of a many of cutte throtes, that lately had made an Inſurrection. All which things ſeeing they were as well preiudiciall to Paule, as vnto Chriſtian religion and truthe, therefore he paſſeth them not ouer without regarde, nor holdeth not his peace like a blocke, but applieth him ſelfe buſily to get licence of the Captaine to make his purgation: which when he had obtained, he vſeth all the helps poſſible to helpe & relieue his cauſe. For he maketh a diligent and long diſcourſe of al the things that he had done, ſo that all the people might vnderſtande his doing, leaſt he might ſeeme to haue done any thing of lightneſſe of head, or of raſhneſſe and boldneſſe. It ſhall be profitable, to harken diligently vnto the Apoſtle, pleading in his chains, and to conſider all the partes of his oration.

Fiſt, he comprehendeth his beginning and propoſition in few wordes. For he calleth them brethren and fathers, wherein he goeth about to get their good will. It maketh alſo for the ſame purpoſe, that he vſeth the Hebrew tongue, wherein he knewe they greatly delighted. Then he promiſeth to excuſe him ſelfe, that they might vnderſtand he was guiltleſſe. But his modeſtie is very worthy to be conſidered, in that he doth vouchſafe to call them that were ſo many wayes his profeſſed enimies, and had ſo injured him, brethren, and fathers. For he dothe it not either of flatterie or feare, but partly for that he was of the ſame nation, and partly, for that he hoped in ſo great a multitude, there woulde ſome be founde that were good, or which woulde be conuerted and won by the doctrine of the word. Therefore they are reproved by this example of Paule, that condemne the lawfull and receiued ſtilles of honoure, which the Apoſtle otherwheres commaundeth vs to vſe, where he biddeth vs to goe one before another in

The begin-
ning and
propoſition,

The Par-
ration.

Paule chan-
ged not his
religion of
ignorance.

Gene. 18

honor. Although we allow God such, as through peevish flattery exceede al measure, while they goe not about so much to honor others, as to profite themselves. In the meane season we are taught our dutie, that for a fewes sake, which haue don vs iniury, we shuld not cōdemne the whole nation. For what more greuous iniuries cā be deuised, thā those which the Iewes did vnto Paule? Yet he loueth them, & reuerently speaketh to the. He wi- geth their health and saluation, & wold haue redeemed it with the losse of his own. Yea being yet sore of the late stripes & blowes that they had gi- uen him, & being in bands, he taketh them for his brethren & fathers. Let them wel trie them selues after this rule, who being blinded with hasty anger, & for a trifeling iniurie done by some rascall parson, vse to burthen whole nations with slanders, & with al euil to them, wheras it is not law- ful for a churliā mā, to reuēge him of his enimie. What madness is it ther- fore, to charge a whole cōtry or nation for the naughtinesse of one persō? But let vs return vnto Paul, who after he had premised this breste begin- ning, cometh to the discourse of his doings, not like a vaunter to boast of his vertues, but bicause it was so requisite to his matter. For first beginning with his natiuitie, he putteth that wrogful suspicion out of the captaines hed, that thought he was a captain of hopelosts. The he maketh answer to the Iewes, who partly wer offended at the alteration of their old religiō & partly toke in ill part, his preaching the gospel among the Gentiles. The sum & end of his whole narratiō, is to declare, that he had don nothing of his own hed or auctoritie, but al thing, according to gods cōmandement & calling. Howbeit he so proceedeth in his narration, that he answereth all such obiections of ignorance, contempt of religion or lightnesse, as might be made against him for professing the faith of Christe, & taking vpon him the office of an Apostle. All which things we shall consider in order.

First ther are some which of ignorance, & wāt of vnderstāding, are of no constācie in religion, while for lack of knowledge, they are caried about w euery blast of doctrine. Therefore, lest he shuld be thought to be any of this nūbre, he beginneth with his bringing vp and education. I was (saith he) brought vp in this citie, at the fete of Gamaliel, & was diligently enformed in the law of the fathers. It is not without a cause that he maketh mention both of the citie of Ierusalem, & of his teacher, for in this citie was the most famous vniuersitie of al that nation, & his master amōg the lawyers and doctors, was of grettest authoritie, as we haue alredy herd, ch. v. Therefore it could not be, that he that had bene brought vp frō his childhode in that citie, in the middle of their sacrifices, & vnder such a mā, could be rude and ignorāt in the scriptures & religiō. Moreover, Pauls exāple serueth trimly for al our enstructiōs, who hauing to entreat of faith & religion, first of al putteth away suspicion of ignorance & vnskilfulnesse, hereby teaching vs, that no man ought to be ignorant in religion, & that their opinion is not to be allowed, which affirme it is inough only to beleue, and will not suffer any diligent examination to be vsed in matters of religion. For God will haue vs to be instructed frō our infācie, as may be sene. Ex. 14. De. 6. Ps. 78. And Abraham is praised for no cause so much, as that he was so diligent in bringing vp his familie, in the knowledge of Gods religion. Here haue parents what to obserue, who vnlesse they infuse religion into the tender mindes of their children, shall neuer haue them tractable in their age.

For

For that wee proue by experience in grasses, houlles, dogges, and other beasts, the same we finde in the education of children. But O great slouth & vngodlinesse of vs, which take such great paines in training of houndes, and breaking of houlles, and care so little how vnruly and vntowarde our children growe. Furthermore, it is a great token of modestie and loue in Paule, that he would make such reuerend mention of Gamaliel his master, whome yet he knew did erre in many poyntes, and throughe whose teaching, he learned that preposterous zeale of the lawe. Yet he acknowledged himselfe beholding to him, for as much as vnder him, he had at least, learned good literature. Then howe much more bound are we, vnto suche masters, as beside learning, teach vs godlinesse, and the tracke of true saluation: Heereunto referre the commaundement of God in the tables, touching the honouring of our parents.

But to persist in the narration of Paule, there are againe other some, which of a certaine wicked contempt, passe vnto other religions, perswading them selues that men may be saued, vnder any religion. These men, while they seeme to allowe all religions, they plainly ouerthrowe all religion, and imagine that God is some foolish ambitious body, delighted with diuers kindes of players. Therefore least any might thinke Paule to be one of this sort, he sayth, that he was zealous and feruent in the Jewes ancient religion. I was feruent minded to Godwarde, as you are all this daye. Other wheres he sayth, he profited therein aboue all his fellowes. Which example teacheth vs, that a zeale is requisite in religion. For althoughe Paule grieuously offended in his zeale, yet is he not by and by to be condemned. For God requireth vs wholly, for as muche as he will be worshipped of vs, with all our hart, with all our soule, & with all our strength. Therefore they are not to be allowed, which thinke it a foolish thing, to contend with other in religion. As though it were lawfull to halt on both sides, and euery day to chaunge religion, as we vse to chaunge mony. But these men be suche as God threatneth he will spue out of his mouth, because of their cowardly coldnesse.

Thirdly there are other, who being of nature inclined to nouelties, vpon euery occasion, of neuer so small a gaine, are contented to be perswaded to any thing, or else will receiue the same without any perswasion. Which as they are a filthie and dishonest kinde of people, so Paule sheweth himselfe to be farre diuers from them, saying: I persecuted this way vnto the death, binding and putting into prison all, both men & women. And not contented to haue put them in gaile, which in this Citie professed not Christ, I went with letters of the Elders as farre as Damascus, to trouble them also that beleeued there. And of this his doing, he calleth the Bishop and Elders to witnesse, least any man should doubt of it. Heereby he declareth that such a feruent zeale, could not be altered sodenly, without some working of God, so that he was called of God, and constrained to embrace the faith of Christ, as in the things folowing more manifestly I will declare. This example of Paule teacheth vs, that in religion we must cheefely beware we seeke not our owne aduantage, by taking the affections of the flesh to counsell. For they that so do, are carried about with euery winde, and although they sometime take hold of true religion, yet they by and by fall from the same again, as soon as they perceiue it agreeth not with their desires.

Paule changed not his religion of wicked contempt.

Apoca. 3

Paule altered not his religion of lightnesse and inconstancie.

desires. Let vs therefore cast away the blinde desires of the world and the flesh, and harken to the voice of God, which we must follow, and embrace Christ, that being builded vpon him, we may stande fast against all tempestes and stormes, and so growe in him, that hereafter we may raigne with him in Heauen, to whome be prayse, honour, power and glorie, for euer. Amen.

The. Cxlij. Homely.

AND it fortuneth that as I made my iourney and came nigh vnto Damascus, aboute noone, sodenly there shone from Heauen a great light round about me, and I fel vnto the earth, and hard a voice saying vnto me: Saule, Saule, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, what art thou Lorde? And he sayd vnto me, I am Iesus of Nazareth whome thou persecutest. And they that were with me sawe verily a light, and were afraide, but they heard not the voice of him that spake with me. And I sayde, what shall I do Lord? And the Lord sayd to me: Arise, and go into Damascus, and there it shall be tolde thee of all things, which are appoynted for thee to do. And when I sawe nothing for the brightnesse of that light, I was led by the hand of them that were with me, and came into Damascus.



The Apostle Paule speaking in chaines before the Jewes, maketh a diligent reporte of the things by him done, not to the intent that of vainglorie and ambition he meant to haunt him of his vertues, but to put away wrongfull suspitions, and to make all men knowe that he toke him not to the Religion of Christ rashely and of his owne heade, but by Gods calling and appointmente, and so preached the same vnto the Gentiles. And to this end ought all those things cheefly to be referred, which he yesterday spake touching his bringing vp, profiting in the discipline of the law, of his zeale in Religion, and persecuting of Chrystes Church. For hereby every man might easily perceyue, that so feruent and earnest a defender of the law, and enemie of Christian religion could not so sodenly be altered but by Gods power and working. This thing he here proueth now more evidently, where he declareth the storie of his conuersion, with all the circumstances in order, which storie, bicause it is otherwheres at large entreted, we wil touch but such things only as make for the state of this present cause, with a few other things, the rehearsal wherof shal not be superfluous, and which to consider oftentimes, shall be very profitable for vs.

The first thing heere to be obserued, is that Paule excuseth his leauing the Jewes religion for Christes, by this one argument, that God was the author and Counseller of him thereto. Whereuppon we gather, that they ought not to be reprehended, which at Gods calling, forsake their old superstitions, and embrace true religion, forasmuch as it is euident, that

God

Alteration
of religion,
is to be ex-
cused by the
word of god
alone.

God commaundeth nothing but that that is iust and wholesome, and we owe him obedience without delay. For onlesse we thus thinke, wee can not excuse neither Paule, nor the Apostles, of lightnesse and inconstancie, who all folowing the sonne of God, chaunged that religion, that they had bene bozne and brought vp in. These things teache vs, how vniustly we are accused of our aduersaries, for forsaking the Romische Church, seeing we may answer them euen as Paule heere answered the Iewes, namely, that we haue done nothing of our owne head, but haue altered our religion, according to the appointment and commaundement of Christ. For although Christ vsed not the same mene and way with vs, that he did with Paule, yet we haue heard his voice sounding in his word, and haue followed him. He crieth: Come vnto me all that trauell and be heauy laden, and I will refreshe you. If any man thirst, let him come vnto me, and drinke. I am the light of the world, he that followeth me, walketh not in darkenesse. I am the dore, if any enter in by me, he shall be safe, and goe in and out, and finde pasture. He that entreth not in by the dore, but climeth vp some other way, is a theefe and a murdherer. Againe: I am the way, the light, and the truth. No man cometh to the father, but by me. Heereunto belong the sayings of the Apostles, which being inspired with the spirite of Christe, affirme with one accorde, that in him onely, saluation is to be had and founde. What wise man therefore wil blame vs, which following the liuely voice of Christ, haue left the Romische sea, which hathe shewed vnto vs infinite wayes of saluation beside him, yea which with hir traditions hath brought vs in dout of our saluation: How much more are they to be reprehended, which wickedly despise Christ, calling vs aloud vnto him, with his armes spread abroad, being like to those obstinate and vnthankful persons, of whome he complaineth in the Prophet. And if any man reiect our excuse, verily he sufficiently declareth, that he is led with the wicked spirit of the Iewes, who disdained to heare Paule, defending himselfe with the same reason.

Secondarily, heere appeareth the marvellous power of Christ, and the meanes that he was wont to vse, in subduing of his enemies: where three things are to be considered. The first is, how he suffreth Paule, to approach neare vnto Damascus, before he declare any signe of his wrathe & iudgement. And there is no doubt, but hauing the Citie in his sight, which he thought was a Sanctuarie for the faithfull, he was altogether inflamed with furie, the godly in the citie miserably trembling in the meane while, for feare, to whose eares the fame of this Wolfe that hied hym so fast, was comen afore. But euen as he was ready to set mouth on his pray, the Lord was at hand. For this is Goddes propertie, to winke at many things in the wicked, and for a time to beare with their attemptes, that while he chastiseth those that be his, a pit may be digged by for their enemies in the meane season, and so his people are the more gloriously deliuered. See the Psalme. 94. Next of al, he easily and without any do, layeth this tyrant along, which came both stout in minde with manacings, and with publike authoritie. For with a lightning, he vtterly dismayeth him. But what is so easie vnto God, as to throw lightning from heauen: And by and by this furious Euceladus and Giant falleth to the ground, whom neither his companie and retinue, nor the high Priestes letters, could de-

Math. 11

Iohn. 7

Iohn. 8

Iohn. 10

Iohn. 14

The power
of Christ in
subduing
of his ene-
mies,

Psalme. 94

tend from the wrath of Christ. And straight way, being become tame and gentle, he demaundeth what mighty Champion this is, offering to be at his appoyment and obedience in all things. Besides this, he is not only made feeble in body, but also stricken blinde, in so much that he is faine to be led by the hand into that Citie by others, to the which he came to sette out the Christians. Thus God bleth in wonderfull wise, to disapoint and delude the enterprises of his enemies, so that they which ere while seemed to all men invincible, and as it were to prescribe God, are laughed of all men to scorn. Examples heereof we haue elsewhere declared, the ende of all which is this, that we feare not the power of our enemies, but set our hope fast in God, who can so easily deliuer vs out of their hands.

And to this ende cheefely serue (which is the thirde point of this treatise) the words of Christe, saying: Saule, Saule, why persecutest thou me? Again, I am Iesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest. For by these words he plainly testifieth, that whatsoeuer had hitherto bene done against his faithful people, was done vnto him. For there is suche a coniunction betwixt Christ and vs, as bleth to be betweene the head and the members. Who wold haue thought, that Christ had had any regard of his church, when Steuen was so vnworthily stoned to deathe. Or when Saule burst open the doores, and caried both men and women to prison. But yet Christ did not onely see these things, and was sorry for the calamitie of his people, but was so affected, as though he had bene beaten and caried to prison himselfe. Heerevnto becometh that which hee saith in the Prophet: He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye. These things as they serue for the consolation of the godly: so oughte they to feare all those which thinke it but a light matter, to persecute the members of Christ, either for their faith or religion, or else to iniurie them, or oppresse them, by vsurie, or other vniust meanes. For he heareth the cry of his seruantes, and sheweth himselfe a mightie reuenger. In the meane season, Christes example teacheth vs what a compassion and affection ought also to be amongst vs, which glory in Christ our head, and doe professe to be members all of one body. Let vs therfore reioyce with them that reioyce, and lament with them that lament.

Last of all, heere is set forth vnto vs a notable example of true conuersion, al the circumstances whereof it shalbe very profitable to consider. And first Paule himselfe is to be considered, who before he was conuerted, was like such a wolf as Iacob the Patriark for the wed of. For burning altogether in rage, he goeth on to wurrie and scatter abroad Christes shepfold, not once thinking al the meane while of his owne conuersion vnto Christ. Therfore he rusheth in furious wise into his owne destruction, & vndoubtedly had perished, if the Lord reaching his hand from heauen had not pulled him back. Wherby we lerne that the beginning of conuersion springeth of god, for we be al in that state & conditiō that Paul was, for being of nature corrupted, we folow the blind affections of the flesh, and being bewitched with intisements of sinne, we please our selues in our sinful doing, neuer thinking of amendment, vnlesse the spirit of god put vs in mind therof, for what can we herein do, who of our selues are not able once to thinke wel? Therfore the Prophet saith very wel. Conuert vs & we shalbe conuerted, and Paul testifieth that God worketh in vs both the wil and the dede, according

Zacha, 2

1. Cor. 12
Rom. 12
An example
of true con-
uersion.

First, the
beginning
of conuer-
sion spring-
eth of god.
2. Cor. 3
Iere. 21
Thren. 5
Phil. 2.

ding

ding to his good picture. This part might be declared by many examples, but forasmuch as they are euer y where easie to be seene to all the that read the scriptures, we will be bryfe. And here the defenders of free will are convinced, which teach that a man may learne & repent at his owne voluntary pleasure. But if the beginning of conuersion procede of our selues, then surely some praise of merite & desert is due to our work, which cannot stand without the reproch of Christ. But if the beginning of goodnesse procede fro God alone, why be we so proud, & brag so much of free will, seeing ther is no blytherof in that thing wherof we stand most in neede, according to these mens iudgement. But to let passe these matters, let vs peruse the manner of Pauls conuersion, which containeth in it certain extren & outward things, & certē intern & inward. The things external, are Pauls abashment w the lighting & throwing from his horse, & Christes reproving him of his heinous sin by his word. Inwardly Christ worketh by his spirit, & bringeth down his haultie stomacke. This is the solempne and common vsage of God in conuerting of sinners, & such as the corruption of our nature of necessitie requirerh. For wher we wallow & delite in sin, it behouerh vs to be wakened with some strange plage or calamitie. And to this end, god sendeth vs diuers chastisements, such as are sicknesses, pouerty, dearth, hunger, wars, and whatsoeuer like aduersities happen vs either priuately or publikey. Again, wheras our flesh neuer iudgeth rightly of sin, it is nedeful that the ouglinesse therof be bewaid by the word of God, which thing Christ declareth saying of his spirit, that it reprouerh the world of sin. Unto these externe & outward things, God ioyneth secrete suggestions of his spirite, wherby he twitcheth vs by the eares of our conscience, & stirreth vs vp earnestly to think of repentance. And that god hath obserued this order fro the beginning of the world, he shal easily perceiue in himself, that hath not biterly lost his senses. And what we haue to do, when God by such meanes as these allureth vs, Pauls exaple declareth. In dede ther appereth in him some smack of carnal slouthfulnesse, which being stricke to the ground, doth not yet know his Lord. But this is worthy to be comended, that whē the Lord had told him what he was, by & by he demandeth, what his wil is, that he should do. For this is the saying of a true & humble hart, submitting himself wholly to obey the wil of God. Let vs therefore folow this exaple, which the holy Ghost wold haue put in wytyng, to serue for our instruction. And when we are chastised, let vs think we are chastised of the Lord, who requirerh of vs repentance. And let vs do penance, not according to our owne braine, or as seemeth good in our sight, but according to Gods appointment which we shal learne in his word. For after this sort aduersitie shal serue to our amendment, and our amendment or conuersion shal be acceptable vnto God. But if a mā wold compare these things with the vsage of our dayes, he shal easily perceiue, how many wayes me herein offend. For a man shal find few, which whē they are chastised, wil acknowledge God to be the author therof, but the most part impute their misfortunes vnto other causes. And if there be any so touched with the feeling of religion, that they are constrained to acknowledge the hand of God, yet is that feeling very smal, and of litle continuance, or else ioyned with superstition, wherby being decriued, they do their penance but counterfetly, and for a litle season, as God hybraideth the people of Israel by his Prophet.

Secondly,
the manner
of conuer-
sion.

Iohn. 6

Thirdly,
the duties
of conuer-
sion.

Hose. 6

See the Ho-
mely. 63.
chap. 6.

And one
Ananias
came vnto
me
and

And of

And of
Ananias
came vnto
me
and

The de-
scription of
Ananias.

And this is the cheefe cause of so many and so continuall calamities, as are in our dayes, which if we redresse not, lette vs neuer looke for better state. The last thing in this treatise, is how Paule is sent into the Citie to Ananias, of whome he requireth more fully to be instructed. The causes of this precept or doing, we haue declared before, where ye may loke for the same. It becommieth vs to follow the example of Paule, that framing our selues according to Gods calling, we turne from superstition and other sinnes vnto God, and hang wholly vpon his mouth and word, fashioning our life and conuersation, according to his will. For so after we haue happily ended this life, we shall be coheires in heauen with Iesus Christe, the sonne of the ever liuing God, to whome be praise, honoz, power, and glory for ever. Amen.

The. Cxliij. Homely.

And one Ananias a perfecte man, and as pertaining to the lawe, hauing a good reporte of all the Iewes, which there dwelt, came vnto mee and stood, and said vnto me: brother Saule, receiue thy light. And the same houre I receiued my sight, and sawe him. And he saide, the God of our fathers, hath ordained thee before, that thou shouldest knowe his will, and shouldest heare the voice of his mouth: For thou shalt be his witnesse vnto all men of those things, which thou hast seene and heard. And nowe why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sinnes, in calling on the name of the Lord.



Because all change of religion is odious, as arguing a light and inconstant minde, therefore Paule so diligently excuseth his leauing the Jewes religion. And first he declareth, that he behaued himselfe therein with great zeale, least any should thinke, he were fallen away of ignorance and lack of knowledge, or of hatred of discipline, or of leuitie and inconstantnesse. And he beginneth the Historie of his vocation in suche sorte, as it may appeare, that he was not onely called by God, but also constrained. And now he addeth hereunto, how he was ordained vnto the office of an Apostle, by the ministry of Ananias, who was appointed of God to be the interpreter of this heavenly oracie and vision. The principall vse of this place, is to answer them which suspected the storie of his vocation, and saide, that Paule was deceiued by a baine fantasie and delusion.

He beginneth in commodious wise with the description of Ananias, lest any man might thinke he had giuen credit to any slender or light person of no estimation. And for bicause the Iewes would not haue admitted the testimonie of any that had forsaken his religion, he first and forme most commendeth him for a diligent obseruer and follower of the lawe, where he saith, he is a godly man according to the lawe. Vnto this commendation, he ioyneth the publike testimonie of all the Iewes, dwelling at that time at Damascus. Besides this, he declareth howe his sight was restored to him

him againe, the cheefe vse wherof it seemeth God would haue to be this, that Paule mighte knowe, that Ananias was sent vnto him of God. For who woulde accuse him of vanitie, which beeing admonished by heavenly Oracle, yea beeing utterly amazed, and following such an expounder of the Oracle, had altered his religion: And Pauls example teacheth vs, that of all things we must flee leuitie in religion, that wee rashly beleue not enery one. For as in religion consisteth the summe of our saluation: so it appeareth there haue bene in all ages deceiuers, whiche haue layde snares to entrappe the mindes of the simple. And both Chrysostome and the Apostles abundantly teache vs, that suche should arise in the Church after them. Therefore the suggestions of the men of our dayes is to be lamented, which in the most cleare light of the Gospell, beleue euery spirit, contrary to the bydding of Iohn the Apostle: yea they take them to be the true followers of the Apostles, which with scoffery and tauntes can quippe the Ecclesiastical Ministers and Magistrates in secrete, whereas them selues in the meane season are neither learned nor honest. Agayne let vs marke what the true commendation of a Minister is, and of all that beare any publike office. The first thing is godlynesse, ordered and directed after the lawe of God, that is according to Gods appoyntment. For it is not ynough onely to be godly, but wee must frame the same according to Gods worde. Otherwise it shall be a zeale without knowledge, suche as the Jewes and Paule sometime were deceiued with. Agayne, they must haue a good testimonie of them, amongst whom they dwell, and also of others abroade, that the Gospell bee not euill spoken of for their sake. See Paule touching this poynt, in the first to Timothe, the third chapter. Vnto this must be ioyned a laboful vocation or calling, which thing if they feele not in them selues, they shall neither boldly nor profitably discharge their duetie. But it is euident that the Prophets and Apostles, to whom we haue giuen credite, were suche. For they following the worde of God in all thing, haue not swarued one nayles breadth from the same. And such was their integritie of life, that to this day the Turkes and Papistes reuerence their name. Concerning their calling no man can doubt, seeing there are so many testimonies thereof extant in the Scriptures. Therefore they are not to be accused of vanitie, that haue beleued them. Let vs rather constantly stande by the sayth which they haue taughte vs, as the which onely is sufficient to saue vs:

Furthermore when Paule had described the person of Ananias, he reherceth also by word what he said, because euery thing therein made very much for the matter he had in hande. For bothe he teacheth, that God was the onely author of all this busynesse, and declareth the ende wherfore he was called, and last of al exhorteth him to be baptised. Touching the first poynt, he sayth: The God of our fathers hath ordeyned thee before. Hereby verily was Paule so certaine of his vocation, that afterwarde he was bolde to say, that he was ordeyned euen from hys mothers wombe to preache the Gospell. He calleth him expressly the God of the fathers, to declare that he swarued not from the righte worshipping of God. Howebeit as these things excuse Pauls turning from the Jewes religion, and proue his doctrine to be true: so they shewe that he was called through no deserte of his, but onely of the meere grace of God. For what was there in Paule,

The true commendation of Ministers.

Ananias's vocation or talke.

Paule is called of God.

Gala. 1.

1. Timo. 1.

To what
ende Paule
was called.

Iohn. 6.

Iere. 23.

Math. 11.

Gala. 1. & 2.

being a cruell enimie of Chryst, and imbued with the blood of steuen the first Martyr, wherefore he should be called: He him selfe truly sayth he is the greatest sinner of all others, and confesseth it was the benefite of Gods meere bountie and goodnesse that he was made the Minister and Apostle of Chryste. And that wee speake of Paule, is to bee verified of all Ministers. For wee are all of lyke soyte, so that if God prevented vs not with hys goodnesse, we were not able to thinke one good thought. Herof we haue elsewhere entreated more at large.

Nowe let vs heare to what ende God prepared Paule. Firste, to know his wyll. Hee beginneth with this, for bycause Ministers muste heere- with beginne, who if they vnderstande not the will of God them selues, can neuer be able to teache it to others. For although Paule was brought vp of a childe in the lawe of God, yet was he hitherto ignoraunt of the will of God, which was wrapped and folded vp in the Lawe. For hee thoughte that men were iustified and saued by the Lawe, being br- terly ignoraunte of Gods will, which is, that euery one that seeth the sonne, and beleeueth in him that sent him, shoulde not perishe in his sinnes, but being iustified by the merite of the sonne, shoulde haue lyfe euerlasting. Therefore it was necessarie that this wyll should bee reuealed vnto him, to the intent that he should not wander vp and downe in the shadowes of the lawe, being vncertayne of his saluation. Furthermoze, where the wholsome will of God is onely contayned and learned in Chryste, Ananias by and by addeth howe he shoulde knowe hym, saying, that Paule was ordeyned to the ende to see that iuste. So he calleth Chryste, both for that he is him selfe iuste and faultlesse, and also for that he maketh all those iust that beleeue in him. In so muche that the Prophete sayde long agoe that shoulde be his name: The Lord our righteousnesse. But where it was the worke of God that Paule knew Chryst, it is euident that none commeth to the knowledge of him, except God vouchsafe to reueale him vnto him. For euen by Chrystes testimonie: None seeth the sonne, but the father, and he to whom the father doth vouchsafe to reueale him. Wherby agayne it appea- reth, that our saluation proceedeth of Gods free mercy. Thidly he sayth, he was ordeined to heare the voyce of his mouth, and so should be taught of God otherwise than by his ordinary meanes, which things otherwhe- res Paule cheefly brgeth agaynst them which went about to eleuate and diminishe the authoritie of his Ministerie. This is verily a maruellous benefite of God, and so shall it appeare in deepe to be, if wee consider that Paule was the enimie of God, and yet God doth vouchsafe friendly and fa- miliarly to talk with him. Let vs also acknowledge the goodnesse of God, which doth vouchsafe euery day to speake vnto those whom he mighte of right repute as his enimies, and iustly persecute them. In the meane sea- son heere are all Ministers admonished of their duetie; namely, to fetch their doctrine from the mouth of God, that is to say, from the scriptures, and not to thinke it is lawefull for them at their pleasure to charge the Church with newe decrees and ordinaunces. See what we haue sayd elsewhere touching this poynte. Last of all, he declareth the office wher- vnto he was called of God, saying that the will of God, the knowledge of Chryst and hys worde, was therefore declared vnto him, bycause he should be a witnesse of Chryst, whom he had both heard and seene, vnto all men.

men. Thus it appeareth he was matched with the other Apostles, because they had none other thing inioyned them, but to beare witness of Chrystes lyfe and death, of his doctrine and miracles, and laste of all, of his resurrection and ascension. This name witness, comprehendeth in it the whole duetie of an Apostle and Minister, as we declared in the first Chapter, where you may looke for those obseruations which here for breuities sake are omitted. He maketh mention expressely of al men, to answer them which thought it an vnmeet thing for him to preach the Gospel of Christ to vncircumcised people. Also here may be taken out a generall doctrine, which admonisheth al such of their duties, as God hath illuminated with the knowledge of his sonne, and of his will. That is, to spreade the same knowledge abroade euery where, and to beare witness in all places of Gods mercy and grace. This thing partely the rule of thankfulness requireth, that they should set forth the glory of God, who haue felte of hys healthfull hande and mercy, and partely brotherly charitie, whereby wee shoulde be as carefull of others saluation, as of our owne. With the which reasons, as also with the expresse commaundement of God, it appeareth Paule was moued in suche wise, that he could not intermitte hys duetie, though the Jewes disdayned him neuer so muche.

Now remayneth the laste parte of Ananias oration, where he exhorteth him to be baptised, that he should openly professe the name of Christ, and be grafted into his Church, according to Chrystes comendement. And this he bygeth with great grauitie & weight: Why lingerest thou (saith he) not for that Paule ment to defer or chist off the matter, but to picke hym forward the more earnestly, being dismayed with feare and trembling in conscience. Wherefore he addeth this saying: Arise and bee baptised, and washe away thy sinnes in calling on the name of the Lorde. Here we haue to obserue his maner of speaking of the Sacrament, which declareth the reason and dignitie of baptism. For Ananias meaning was not, that he thought sinnes were washed away by water, which the Scripture euery where teacheth, are censed & purged by the onely blood of Chryste. But bycause that washing which is made by the blood of Chryst, is outwardly shadowed and expresse by Baptisme, it cometh to passe, that by reason of suche phrase of Scripture synnes are sayde to bee washed away by baptism. And bycause Paule shoulde not thinke it a straunge or harde kynde of saying, he addeth thereto, by calling on the name of the Lorde. For by these words he is sent vnto Chryst, which being taken hold of, and called vpon by faith, bestoweth such gifts of saluation vpon vs, as the sacraments vse to figure and shadow out vnto vs. And as we must in vsing of the Sacraments haue a respecte vnto Chryste, if wee will haue them to profite vs: so agayne wee are taught, that they muste not be contemned nor thought superfluous by any meanes. For God hath ordeined nothing without gret consideration, whose intent is not to haue his church ouercharged or clogged by any means. Therefore Philip baptised the Eunuch also after he had confessed his fayth. And Peter thought it good to baptise Cornelius household, whē they had receiued the holy ghost. Yea Paul, whō the holy ghost secretly comendeth, is here earnestly moued to receiue baptism. These examples reprove the despisers of Sacraments, which while they will seeme too spiritual, do wickedly set light the ordinances of God.

3. Paule is
baptised.

But

But chiefly wee haue to marke Paule to followe hys example, and in Religion not to deale rashly or vnconstantly, but beeing rightly instructed in the truth, to labour diligently to keepe and holde fast the same. For so by labours and perils we shall come to the inheritaunce of eternal life, which God the father of mercy hath appoynted vs from euerlasting in his sonne Iesus Chryste, to whome be prayse, honour, power and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.Cxlv. Homelie.

AND it forruned when I was come agayne to Hierusalem, and prayed in the Temple, I was in a traunce, and sawe him saying vnto mee: make haste and get thee quickly out of Hierusalem, for they will not receyue thy witnesse that thou bearest of mee. And I sayde, Lorde, they know that I prised and bet in euery Synagoge them that beleued on thee. And when the bloud of thy witnesse Steuen was shedde, I also stode by, and consented vnto his death, and kept the rayment of them that slue him. And he sayde vnto me, departe, for I will sende thee a farre hence vnto the Gentiles. They gaue him audience vnto this worde, and then lifte vp their voyces and sayde: away with suche a fellowe from the earth. For it is not reason that he should lyue.



Paule the Apostle (as hath nowe oftentimes bene declared) goeth about in this diligent and long discourse of his dooings, to put away the wrongful suspicions and reproches wherewith hys enemies burthened him. There were two thinges chiefly which incensed the mindes of the people agaynst him: namely his turning from the Jewes religion, vnto the fayth of Chryst: and that in preaching the Gospell of saluation vnto the vncircumcised Gentiles, he seemed to match them with the Jewes. For by these things they gathered, that he was the very enimie of the people of God, & a prophane and wicked contemner of the lawe and of the Leuiticall seruice. To the first poynt he hath hitherto answered, alleaging still this one thing, that he had done nothing rashly or of his owne head, but all things according to Gods commaundement and calling: So teaching vs by his example what wee also haue to doo in altering or defending our religion. And now he proceedeth to the seconde poynte, alleaging the same argument, declaring that he was called forth of God to preach vnto the Gentiles, and neuerthelesse, yet ceased not to loue his Countreymen, which thing shall moste playnely appeare by all the partes of that Hystorie, which he here rehearseth.

Paule returneth to Jerusalem.

For first he sayth, he returned to Jerusalem, verily to bestowe hys labour vpon them of whom he was borne, and of whom he was brought vp and instructed. For he maketh mentiō of this iourney for none other cause, but to proue and declare that the faulte was not in him, that he preached

not

not the message of saluation vnto his owne nation. Furthermore we declared before out of the ninth chap. of his Epistle to the Galathians, that this iorney of his was in the fourth yere after he was conuerted. Wherefore to let passe the supputation of the time, let vs consider the example of Paule, which teacheth Ministers, that although they be detters vnto al men, yet ought they to haue a speciall care of their owne countrey and nation. For this is the lawe of nature, that we be bounde vnto those about others, amongst whom we haue bene borne and brought vp from our childhoode. This rule Chryst obserued also, when he offered the doctrine of saluation euē at the beginning to those of Nazareth, whose unkindnesse yet he was not ignoraunt of. And that that is sayd vnto the Ministers, the same must all men obserue, most to esteeme their owne natie soyle & countrey. Wherin it behoueth them to folow Moses, which chose rather to forsake the riches and delyses of the Court, than his brethren oppressed with tyrannie. Let them here learne their wickednesse which are growen to such impudencie, that they can find in their heart to sel the libertie of their countrey, lawes and priuileges, and all other things, so they may get any priuate gayne and aduantage thereby.

But let vs returne vnto Paule, who after he was come againe into the Citie, went into the Temple to pray. And of the Temple he maketh mention partly, bicause none should say he lay lurking in a corner: & partely to put away the suspition of polluting the Temple, which opinion he knewe many had of him. What he desired in his praier may easily be gathered out of the tenth to the Romanes, where he saith: he praied oftentimes for the Jewes, that they might obtaine saluatio. And that this was the very end of his prayer we shal playnly see by the communication folowing, which he had with Chryst touching the Jewes. Agayne, Ministers are here admonished of their duetie, that is, with continuall prayers to helpe, procure and further the saluation of the people. For as the rule of faith & charitie, wherby they are bound to the flock committed vnto them, commaundeth the same: so necessitie also requireth it, bicause it is euident that their labours are but in vayne, onlesse God giue the encrease. This the auncient Prophets likewise saue, in whose writings are extant many prayers for the people. This must Magistrates also obserue, forasmuche as they are able to do dothing without the ayde and assistance of God, by whose spirit it is nedeful that they be ruled and led. They haue also to imitate the examples of Moses, Dauid, Salomon, Ezechias, beside infinite others.

Now at length Paule expoundeth the Oracle, wherby he was commaunded to go vnto the Gentiles. He saith he was in a traunce for the more credite & authoritie of the oracle. And he diligently reporteth his talke wyth Chryst, both whose persons muste be considered. First, Chryste appeareth vnto him, and byddeth him with speede to get him out of Jerusalem, adding this reason of his commaundement, bycause they will not receyue the testimonie that thou bearest of me. But if a man would consider these things with the vocation of Paule, it shall appeare that thys was no smal temptation & trial of him. For he had heard that he was a chosen vessel of Chryst, & should be his witnesse vnto al men. And it is no doubt but he conceived a special hope of the conuersion of his owne nation, who he so gretly loued and made of. And now he heareth that al his hope was in vayne.

Paule prayeth in the Temple.

Paule by oracle is sent vnto the Gentiles.

But thus God tryeth the fayth of his cholen, when successe falleth not out alwayes according to their godly wylhes and endeouours. So Moses when he beganne to deliuer and defend his countrey men, found how they vnkindely reiected him. So Helias after he had ouercome and killed the priests of Baal, and thought all thing was hyshe and quiet, was feared a frech with the new manaces and cruel attempts of Iezabell. Let vs, being taught by these and suche like examples, not giue ouer, but keepe our standing stoutly, and at length we shall not want occasion, wherby to do profitable service vnto God. But let vs heare Paule, which seemeth by his disputation with God to drawe his head as it were out of the collar. For calling to remembraunce his former state and condition, he thinketh it can not be by reason of his sodaine chaunge, that they could be moued to beleue the Gospel. This is comonly sene in the scripture, that the holy men sometime seeme to contende with God, not of any froward and obstinate mind, but for that they feele the faith confirmed by discussing and examining the diuerse reasons of things. For the which cause God gently permitteth the so to do: who, if he should deale with vs rigorously, would not once vnto safe to speake vnto vs. Here is the superstition of suche ouerthrowne, as thinke we haue neede of Saintes to be our intercessours, bycause it is not lawfull for vs beeing sinners to come in Gods sight, as they say. And yet he heareth not onely the prayers of those that be hys seruantes, but also the reasons and argumentes that they make, even contrary to his commandements. Yet wee muste beware, that we abuse not Gods gentleness in contending, and so proceede vnto murmuring and stubborne disobedience: but rather let vs wholly submit our selues vnto God, to whom it is mete that al our reasons do yeld and giue place. For he will not at any time change his minde & sentence, as it were at our appoyntment, bycause his counsel endureth for ever. This Paule proueth here in this place. For the Lorde bygeth his commandement, and expressely sendeth him vnto the Gentiles, not promising him any successe of the Gospel among them, bycause he will haue vs simply to obey him.

Paule is disturbed in his oration.

so ge shul
that is alwa
ad wone
and thus

Furthermore, as Paule would haue gone forwarde, and haue declared a reason of his doctrine, the Jewes with furious clamours cry out vpon hym, yea required to haue him put to death. For as soone as they herd the Gentils were mentioned, they could kepe patience nor modesty no longer. The cause of this their importunitie & vnrasonableness was the proud conceipt & opinion they had of theselues. For where they claymed to them only the name of gods people, & leaned vpon the merit of their leuitical law, they thought it an hainous offence for any ma to match the gentils, which were vncircumcised, & not vnder the discipline of the law, with them in the state of saluation. So arrogant & proud a thing is hypocrisie & dissimulation. Thus we know the Pharisees sometime were offended with Christ, for that he preached saluation vnto publicans. So now adays the doctrine of the gospel semeth a thing intollerable to the monks & their adherents, because it sheweth saluation in christ vnto sinners, & teacheth that they are iustified by faith only. For hereby they see their inuentions, wherin they put al their trust throwen down. But let vs confesse the goodnesse of god, & not be grieued to haue sinners conuerted vnto the faith, to be partakers of saluation with vs, seeing that Iesus Christ the only begotten sonne of God, and

our

our saulour did vouchsafe to be hanged among theeues, and there purged the sinnes of the whole worlde, to whome be prayse, honour, glory and power, for euer. Amen.

The. Cxlvj. Homelie.

ANd as they cryed and caste off their clothes, and threw duste into the ayre, the Captayne commaunded him to be brought into the Castle, and bad that he should be scourged, and to be examined, that he myghte know wherefore they cryed so on him. And when they bounde him wyth thongs, Paule sayde vnto the Centurion that stood by him: Is it lawfull for you to scourge a man that is a Romane, and vncondemned? When the Centurion heard that, he went and tolde the vpper Captaine, saying: what intendest thou to doo? for this man is a Citizen of Rome. Then the vpper Captayne came and sayd to him: Tell mee, art thou a Romane? He sayde, yea. And the Captayne aunswered: with a great summe obteyned I thys freedome. And Paule sayde: I was free borne. Then strayght way departed from him they which should haue examined him. And the high Captaine also was afrayde, after he knew that he was a Romane, and bycause he had bounde him. On the morrowe, bycause he woulde haue knowne the certentie wherefore he was accused of the Iewes, he loosed him from hys bondes, and commaunded the highe priestes, and all the Councell to come togyther, and brought Paule forth, and set him before them.



Although Paule the Apostle hath so aunswered the poyntes of his aduersaries accusation, that it mighte satisfie all the godly well inough, as alleaging the commaundement of God for all hys dooings: yet were the Iewes so little satisfied therewith, that they would vouchsafe to heare him no longer. The chiefe cause of this their indignation was, for that he sayde God had sent him vnto the Gentiles. For thereby they construed that God had reiected them, as vnworthy of saluation, and thought the Gentiles were preferred befoze them, which seemed to them a haynous matter, bycause the people of the Iewes were counted alwayes to be Gods owne childzen, and the Gentiles were counted for vncleane persons, and straungers from the kingdome of God. For this is the propertie of all Hypocrites, that they can not abide to haue sinners to be coparteners with them in the societie of saluation, as yester day wee heard. Howebeit, Luke going forwarde in the Hystorie begunne, declareth furthermoze what was done, where wee haue to consider euery person.

Firste, wee haue to speake of the Iewes, which wyth vnseemely clamour require to haue Paule put to death befoze he had ended his Oration. Which is so muche the moze haynous a matter, for that they desire to haue their owne countreyman to be tormented at the pleasure of a prophane & heathen souldiour. Beside this they handle their matter with no

The impo-
tunate ma-
lice of the
Iewes.

arguments or colour of honestie, but with clamours, with casting away their clothes, with throwing by of duste, and other lyke furious gestures and braydes, such as braynesicke and madde persons vse. Which example teacheth vs how much hatred of truth is able to doe, seeing it maketh them whose mindes it hath possessed, to forget all modestie, equitie, and charitie. For that that here was done agaynst Paule, was done before in the presence of Pilate in Chrystes cause. And there wante not examples, wherby it may be proued how the wicked vse the very same in these daies also. Furthermore this place teacheth vs what arguments commonly are made & used agaynst the seruants of Chryst in these dayes, as well in their owne quarell, as in Chrystes. That is to say, shouting, threatening, punishments, fire, sword, &c. With these weapons they haue fought euen from the beginning of the worlde, and with the same they fight still euen at this day. And this is a miserable blindnesse and perversenesse of the worlde, that where in prophane and worldly matters all men prayse and holde with aduised deliberation: in matters of religion, and the common case of eternall saluation, many men thinke the matter should be handled and dispatched with vnreasonable noyse, furious braydes, bywordes and rebellion.

Paule is com-
maunded to
be beaten
with rods.

But what dothe the Capitayne in this great rage of the Jewes. Firste he commaunded Paule to be had into the Castle, which thing was prudently done of him, bicause there was no more effectual meane to appease the people, than to haue him out of their sight, agaynst whom they boyled in such anger & hatred. But by & by he offendeth in vnrighteousnesse, commanding him, of whom as yet he had no sure suspition of any crime, after the accustomed maner to be scourged & examined. For the Jewes had proued nothing agaynst him, and he had heard Paule answer to his slaunders very wisely. But herein he seemeth worthy of excuse, bicause it was likely that he whose death all the people desired with one consent, was not faultlesse. But if we admit such coniectures, who I pray you then shall be innocent: who shall not be oppressed with sedicious clamour. Therefore this was a greuous fault in the captaine. And hereby let all that beare office and be in authoritie learne, that they be not ouer cruel or hasty in their tormenting & punishing of men. For as it is a greuous fault shamefully to torment an innocent: so it oftentimes cometh to passe, that men being overcome with paine & grefe, confesse they haue don those things which they neuer thought or ment. In the mean season thou shalt marke the vantage of wicked Magistrates. They are of marvellous wit and foresight in politike matters, and therein they passe for the most part the children of light. Yet haue they not true iustice, but only a ceteri baine shew of the same, wherewith being cloaked or couered, they vse to handle matters in iudgement after their own pleasure & commoditie. Hereof we haue an example also in Pilate: & many like are euery where to be found in all hystories. But commonly the ende of these iudgements is unhappie, as we shall shortly perceiue hereafter. Let as many therefore as bee in office, labour to fulfill iustice, forasmuch as the iudgements of God are committed vnto them, and the Lord wyll one day requite the bloude of hys seruantes at their handes. Wee are also taught by this example, what state the Saintes in this worlde are in. They are accompted among the wicked, and iudged vilest

of

of all men, whose bodies and life every man freely scorneth and mocketh, as pleaseth him. This the prophets in times past found to be true. The same Christ also founde him selfe, vpon whome the prophete foretold the same should fall out. Psal. 53. Luke. 22. And his forerunner Iohn was faine to satisfie and yeelde to the incessuous luste of Herode and Herodias. Therefore let it not greeue vs to be counted in the number of these men, nor be offended with the vniuersall iudgements of this world, seeing it is euident, that God wil maintaine and continue the remembrance of his seruants, and so, that the fame of Innocents oppressed with slaunders can not long be hidden. See Psal. 34. Luke. 12.

But let vs see Paule, whose life is here in ieopardie, dothe he holde his peace like a blocke: no. But he runneth vnto the lawes, and alleageth the freedome of the Citie of Rome, whereby he is defended and set at libertie. For as soone as the Captaine heard that hee was a freeman, Citizen of Rome, he commaunded by and by to binde him, and bleseth no torments vpon him. Therefore the patience of the Saintes is no cowardlinesse or beastly stupiditie or blockishnesse, as many imagine. In deede they are ready to suffer any thing for Christes sake, yet they neglect not such lawfull defence, as is agreeable with faith. For as it is lawfull to vse the other creatures of God, euen so is it to vse the lawes also, bicause the authoritie of them, dependeth cheefely vpon God, by whome it is manifest that Magistrates are ordained. But alas howe much more miserable is the state of the Saintes in these dayes: For although the Captaine knewe that it was a matter of religion that was in hand, yet he suffereth Paule to enioy the priuiledges of Rome. But in these dayes both lawes and priuiledges are mute, if religion come once in question. All this we may thanke the Popes of, which teach me that it is lawfull to breake promise with those that are suspected of heresy. What soeuer else may be said to this purpose, loke for it in the sixth Chapter, where is described what hapned to Paule at Philippi, in a like matter or case.

At length foloweth the ende of the first Act of this tragedie. The Captaine is affrayde, not of God, but of the feueritie of the Romaine lawes. This is the manner of all the wicked, preposterously to feare men more than God. Howbeit, being desirous to amend the fault that he had made, and to vnderstand the matter more certainly, he bringeth Paule on the morrow before the counsel, of whose brightness and sanctimonie, he conceiued a very good hope. This Captaine is of the number of those men, which now adayes also, loke for much goodnesse at Counsels: whereas it is euident these many hundred yeares, they haue deceiued the expectation of all godly persons, bicause they are summoned and gouerned by the, which make marchandise of all religion, and through whose tirannie all Christendome is oppressed. Let vs consider how profitable a thing it is, feuerely to keepe and maintaine the publike lawes. For although Claudius Cesar, in whose raigne these things were done, was a shamelesse beast, yet bicause the authoritie of lawes stode in force, there was some defence left for good men. But where as lawes lie troden vnder foote, it is impossible for common weales long to endure. Moreouer, the example of the Captaine teacheth vs, what remaineth for them which to get the good will of men, vse to giue hasty iudgement: Vicerly, euen feare, shamefull trembling,

Paul defendeth himselfe by the Romaine lawes.

The Tribune by feare of lawes, is kept vnder.

and a foule confusion of all things. Therefore whosoever beare office, let them be mindfull of these things, and administer iudgement with deliberation and aduise. And let the godly comfort themselves, in that they see wicked persecutors may be so easily feared, with the power of Christ, to whome be praise, honor, power and glory, for ever. Amen.

The. xxij. Chapter vpon the *Actes of the Apostles.*

The. Cxlvj. Homelie.

PAule behelde the Counsell, and sayde: Men and brethren I haue liued in all good conscience, before God vntill this day. And the high priest Ananias, commaunded them that stood by, to smite him on the mouthe. Then sayd Paule vnto him. God shall smite thee thou painted wall. Sittest thou and iudget me after the Lawe, and commaundest me to be smitten, contrarie to the Lawe. And they that stood by, sayd, reuilest thou Gods high priest? I wist not brethren, that he was the high priest. For it is wryten, thou shalt not curse the ruler of thy people.



S Christ our Saviour appointed Paule to be a chosen and called vessel for him selfe: so by his Example he teacheth vs al, what fauor his faithful are like to finde in this worlde, and what their duetie is in suffering aduersitie. For as soone as Paule had once professed Christ, hee founde them his greivoulest enemies, for whose saluation hee was continually banished. Verily euen the Iewes, for whose sake hee wished to be accursed. And their rage burst out so farre, that they inflamed against him the Romane Captaines, whome otherwise they hated worse than a tode. This is the state that all the godly are in, to proue their familiars and entierest acquaintaunce, most enemies vnto them, whose hatred many times so burneth, that they are not ashamed to aske helpe of forreine enemies against their Christian brethren. But Pauls constant and fearlesse courage defendes himselfe and his cause, against all the assaults of his aduersaries, with the only word and commaundement of God: whose Example it is fitte that we also folowe. When like aduersitie brgett vs.

Further:

Furthermore, this is chiefly to be marvelled at, a fild of consolation, that in all this ado of businesse, Paul suffereth no respect to the captalitie being but an heathen, a man of warre, than in the chief matters of his own comfort, which claimed vnto the mild the same of all goodnesse & learning. For the captain forbidde them to vse any violence, and deliuereth Paul being in hazard of his life out of their furious hands. Again, he permitte him to attenge the lawes for himselfe, and to enjoy the same priuiledges. At length the whole company perceiued that this matter chiefly concerned religion, thinking it belonged no longer to his hearing and determination, he referreth it wholly to them, which gathered in the profession thereof. For assembling togither a Counsell of Priests and Scribes, hee bringeth Paul out vnto them, to haue his matters earnestly tried and examined by law. And this was prudently done, and not vniuulst, in as much as he was an Ethnick, but as the laide yeste day he is he comdemned, because he hath a greater hope in the holinesse of the counsell, than in his own strength. This thing the sequelle folowing abundantly declarerh, which sheweth howe these Priests ioynd all kinde of impudent audacitie and hypocritie togither. But let vs examine every circumstance hereof in order.

Take beginning with Paul, teacheth howe hee behaued himselfe in the Counsell. And first touching his countenance and gesture of body, he sheweth he behelde all the drinke earnestly. This was an argument of a present and constant minde, wherewith it behoueth them chiefly to be armed, which defend the quartell of our heauall being ouercome with fence, they falsly forsake the same, and incourage the wicked enemies of Churche, which commonly take heart and boldnesse vnto them, of the cowardlynesse of the godly. In the meane season here appeareth the veritie of Christs promises. Hee promisseth his spirit for an Advocate to those it shal be his, which shall both comfort them and teache them, if at any time they bee compelled to giue an accompte of their faith, before any Magistrate or Counsell. Therefore being mindefull of his promise, hee forsaketh not his Apoule in so greate and daungerous an enterprise, but armeth him with inuincible courage of minde. But for as muche as these promises are generall, it becometh vs also to take comfort of the same.

Then Paul beginneth his Oration, and boldly pronounceth of his innocencie. (Sayth he) haue liued in all good conscience, before God vntill this day. Which woordes are not so to be vnderstanded, as though he gloryed, that hee were cleare of all sinne, and able to stand vpon his owne righteousnesse before the iudgement seate of God, but hee respecteth the present matter, for his aduersaries accused hym of hys shamefull falling from auncient Religion, of impietie againste God, and that like a publike enemy, hee had wickedly violated the Lawe and the Temple, and all the Leviticall seruice, and had gone aboute to bring the vncleane Gentiles, into the societie of Goddes people. Therefore, because none shoulde bee prevented with these wrongfull suspitions, and denie hym their hearing, hee cleareth him selfe in the beginning, of any fault here in committed, saying: Hee hath done all things of a good conscience, as touching the Office of hys Apouleshippe, in so much that he was able to call GOD to witnesse, of hys integritie and vpryghnesse.

Paul is not
afraide be-
fore the coun-
sell.

Pauls in-
nocencie.

Other

Otherwise, he confesseth him selfe euery where, to be a sinner, and to haue neede of Christs merite and fauour. So many times, holy men in their priuate matters, vse to alledge their innocencie, against suche as slander them, which notwithstanding, in the sight of God, humbly cōfesseth them selues to be vncleane sinners: wherof we haue examples in Moses, Dauid, and infinite others. This beginning of Pauls oration teacheth vs, that in matters of religion, we must chiefly haue regarde vnto our conscience, that nothing be done thzough craft or dissimulation. For where we haue heerein to doe with God, which searcheth the heartes and raines, there is no place for subtiltie and craftie conueyance. And it shall be lawfull for vs to reioyce in the integritie of our conscience, if we order our religion according to the worde of God, and walke diligently in his calling, and not after our owne deuise and pleasure. Which thing if we endeour to doe, God will mercifully pardon those daily slips of life, which we comit thzough the infirmitie of the fleshe, because we turne vnto Christ, and daily repent vs in him.

An exāple
of an Anti-
christian
Counsell.

Moreover, when Paule had begoon his Oration, Ananias which was president of the Counsell, commaunded to smite him on the mouth: either for that he begon to declare his matter, before he was demaunded, or else for that by so bolde a defending of his innocencie, he seemed to accuse them of vnrightheousnesse and iniquitie, or else for that he left out those insolent and proude stiles, which other men vsed to flatter them with. For this kinde of men are easily moued to wrath, specially when they suppose their estimation is lightly regarded, which they farre preferre, both before the glory of God, and the publike saluation of man. Heere let vs marke what manner of Counsels wicked Bishops vse commonly to haue. Paule was burthened before with slanders, whereby they thought to bring him in hatred of all his nation. And when he was about to answer thereto in a great concourse of people, they disturbed him with furious clamoure and shouting: Now againe, as he is about to make his excuse, they resist him with open violence, and that in place of iustice, whereof they would seeme to be great fauourers. Such a Counsell for all the world was it, wherein Christ was condemned, when Caiphas was president. And that was not much vnlike, wherein Steuen was oppressed. Suche also haue bene the Counsels of the Popes this many hundreth yeares, as may be proued by that one Counsell of Constance, where we reade the holy Martires of Christ, John Husse and Hierome of Prague, were condemned with like armoure and weapons. What we may hope for at the Counsels of oure dayes, appeareth abundantly by their indictions or Bulles. The craftie and impudencie wherof who so perceiweth not, doubtlesse they are to be iudged boide of common sense and reason.

Paul offendeth not in rebuking the highe Priest.

But let vs retorne vnto Paule, and see howe he tooke this iniurie. God (saith he) shall smite thee O thou painted wall. &c. In the which wordes it seemeth to some, that he offended against the commaundement of Christ, which biddeth vs to tourne the other cheeke, to him that smiteth vs on the one. But he shall easily be cleared of this fault, if we will weigh bothe his wordes and his person. For he curseth him not of any naughtie minde or affection, but reproveth his sinne, according to the office of an Apostle, and sheweth that God hath a punishment prepared for him. And first, he cal-

leth

leth him painted wall, euer following the example of Christ, which sayth al the whole packe of them were like vnto painted sepulchers, or graues. And by and by he rendzeth a reason why he so sayth, adding: Thou fittest to giue iudgement according to the Lawe. That is to say: Thou claymest vnto thee power to giue Iudgement vpon mee, vnder a proud pretence of Lawe, and commaundest me to bee smitten contrary to Lawe: therefore thou aunswerest not vnto the person and name of a Iudge, but vnder the cloke therof hydest an heart that cannot abide the truth, and that thirsteth for bloud. Therfore God wil strike thee although there be no man to take vengeance on thee. These things (I say) Paule speaketh, according to the office of a Minister, and not of any reprochful or slanderous intende or meaning. And it is no doubt, but he had a respect vnto the example of Christ, who when the Byshops seruant smote him, tourned not his other cheeke, but earnestly rebuked his stoute and contumelious doing. And here in this place we are taught, that the patience which holy Scripture commaundeth, is not such a kinde of cowardlinesse, as giueth the wicked leaue to do what they lust. For although we be commaunded patiently to suffer whatsoeuer God sendeth, yet must we not flatter the wicked nor dissemble Gods iudgements. Also, here may all they which are in office, learne a generall doctrine and rule. For that which Paule threatned vnto Ananias, chaunced not long after. For about the beginning of the Jewes warres, he was cruelly slaine by Manaim, Captaine of a sort of rebellious Jewes: being well worthie of suche a death, who feared not himselfe, to rebell against God: and they shall neuer escape the handes of Gods vengeance, which follow him, in striuing against God, and violently oppressing them that be innocentes, or else suffering them to bee oppressed by other. The Lorde shall smite them, whome the Scriptures euery where teach to be the only and true president and reuenger of al iudgements. And although they be able to fray men, yet shall they neuer escape the handes of God. We haue examples in Pharaos, Saule, Achab, and many others, of whome prophane hystories make mention.

But as Paule was declaring these things, by and by there starte forth certaine that rebuke him, but there was none that would reprehende the vniust force of Ananias. For as tyrants take vpon them to do what they lust: so they easily find flatterers to defend their authority against al men. Whereby it commeth to passe, that where they do al men open iniurie, yet no man dare complaine on them. Alike tyrannie hath the Cleargie vled many yeares in the Church. For where the Monkes and Priests molested al men at their plesure, yet were they counted very holie: and to haue nicked them but in worde onely, was a very dangerous and heinous matter. But Paule, by a feate Ironie and kinde of scozne reproueth this tyrannous hypocrisie, saying: I wist not brethren that he was the high priest. As though he should say: Who would take him for the high Priest, in whom he sawe nothing worzhie such name and title. For if he be the high Priest why heareth he not mens causes quietly, and with indifferencie? Otherwise I am not ignorant, that by Gods lawe no man oughte to curse the lawfull Magistrate. Reade Deuter. 22 & Exod. 22. Magistrats are taught by this Ironie of Paule, that then their authoritie is inuiolable and safe, when they do their office, and shew themselves to be such, as al wise men

flatterers
are the de-
fenders of
Tyrantes.

Deut. 22. &
Exo. 22.
Wise Ma-
gistrates
maye pre-
serue their
authoritie.

may iudge worthy of that honour. For vniuers they promote the glorie of God, refrayne from violence, defende good lawes, and be an example of honest lyfe, the same may be sayde vnto them, that Paul in this place obiecteth to Ananias. For who will take blasphemers, bloudsuckers, lawe-breakers, drunkardes, adulterers, gamsters, ruffians, and such lyke companions, for senatours and rulers we knowe verily, that God of his iust iudgement, sometime ordeyneth such, whose misgouernance, the godlie in temporall matters most patiently suffer. But if the same be not honored as they woulde, let them not maruell. but acknowledge their fault and amend. For in so doyng, they shall haue Iesus Christ, the king of kinges and Lord of Lordes the defender of their auctoritie. To whom be praise, honour, power, and glorie for euer. Amen.

The. Cxlviii Homely.

When Paul perceiued the one part were Saduceis, and the other Phariseis, he cryed out in the counsel: Men and brethren, I am a Pharisey, the sone of a Pharisey: of the hope and resurrection from death, I am iudged. And when he had so sayde, there arose a debate betwene the Phariseis and the Saduceis, and the multitude was deuided. For the Saduceis sayde, there is no resurrection, neyther Angell, nor spirite. But the Phariseis graunt both. And there arose a great crye, and when the Scribes which were of the Phariseis part arose, they stroue saying: We fynde no euill in this man, though a spirite or an angel hath appeared to him, let vs not stryue agaynst God. And when there arose great debate, the Captaine fearyng lest Paule should haue bene plucked asunder of them, commaunded the souldiers to go downe, and to take him from among them, and to bring him into the Castle.



God bleth to exercise his chosen with diuers and greuous tribulations: but agayne, he deliuereth them diuers and many times by meanes vnlooked for, of both which we haue examples in euery place. But among them all this is very notable, which the holy ghost setteth forth by Luke in Paule the chosen vessell of Christ. For we haue hearde, howe he was many wayes layde wayte for by the Iewes, and was many times in daunger of his life. But God oftentimes raised by new helpes, which for the moste part, were suche as Paule once thought not of, muche lesse coulde haue wished for, or requyred. For fyrste, he was deliuered out of the furiose Iewes handes, by the Captayne, and his Souldiers. Shortlye after, where he woulde haue pleated his cause,

he

he was defended from scourging, by priuiledge of the freedome of Rome: at length, when the Captaine had committed both his matter and life vnto most wicked Judges, God sendeth such a diuision among his enemies, that they which not long before wished his death, pronounced him innocent. These things ought to comfort vs, that we through cowardly feare giue not ouer in time of temptation. For they confirme the promises of God, whereby he euerie where promiset to be the reuenger of his people. But where in this presente place there are many other things also very worthy to be considered, it shall bee profitable to examine all the circumstances of the matter, which is here rehearsed.

First and formost, it behoueth thoroughly to consider the cause of the dissention, which Luke saith was the diuersitie of sectes among the Iewes, for some of his aduersaries were Phariseis, and some Saduceis. And as touching the sectes of the Iewes, there are many thinges written in Iosephus, which referreth their beginning vnto the time of the Machabees. And in deede the approuedst author testifie, that they began vnder Iohannes Hircanus the first, for when the Priestes applied them selues more to beare rule, than to care for religion, diuers opinions began to spring about religion, by reason the doctrine of Gods worde ceased, which God had appoynted to be still among his people. Therefore three sectes sprong vp by which deuided the vnitie of the Church and people of God. The first was that of the Phariseis, who not contented with the lawe, folowed traditions, and beleued that righteousnes and saluation might be attained by workes, besides being giuen to the study of Astrologie, they taught fatall destenie, not much differing in this point from the Stoikes. And these men being cloked with the outward covering of workes, were taken for the most holy of all other. The second was the Saduceis, who denying that men were subiect vnto destenie, attributed free will vnto them, and although they seemed earnestly to commend the studie of vertue, yet opened they the windowe vnto Epicure, and vnto all kinde of licentious liuing. For they denied the Angels and immortalitie of the soule, and the resurrection of the body. This sect of all other was in most authoritie, because it gaue more libertie than the sharpe traditions of the Phariseis, and therefore was very acceptable vnto many. Of the thirde sect were the Elseni, who perceyuing that the Phariseis and Saduceis measured or weighed vertue, but by wordes only, and would not them selues expresse the same in their deedes, liued a single life, would haue no seruantes, had their goods common, gat their liuing with the labour of their hands, and would not come at publique seruice, for feare of polluting them selues with other mens companie. And because these men were fewe in number, and sought not to be in office and authoritie, they got them to dwell in pleasaunt places, set with Balsamum, where they planted gardens, and studied Philicke, whereby because they dyd men good, they gat great commendation of vertue among all men. These mens blages, the Anabaptistes in our dayes doe greatly resemble, sayng that they more disturbe common weales, and fulfill their profession lesse sincere, because they runne headlong into all kinde of beastlinesse, and are miserably vexed and tossed with the perturbations of enuie and hatred.

Yet because this rule of the Elsenes, was somewhat austere and displea-

Of the
sectes of the
Iewes.

Phariseis.

Saduceis.

Elsenes.

fant, it had therefore (as we saide) the fewer that followed it. This is the cause, that the wyrters of the Gospell make mention onely but of the two first sectes. Wee haue to obserue, what euill the couetousnesse of Bishops and idlenesse that springeth thereof, bleseth to breede: seeing these euilles so defourmed the primitiue Church. For the orders of Monkes in Papistrie bredde of the like beginning, abundantly teache vs, that this is alwayes the effecte of those vices. For the which cause we haue the more neede, to take heede in these dayes, that the like or worse happen not againe. Also, the goodnesse of God is to bee magnified, which in so foule a scatterment of his flocke, hath yet reserued some remnauntes in his Church, whereby the same at length might be renewed againe: as we see came to passe in the Papacie, where the Monkes in euery place ruled the roste. For at all times, and in all places, there haue bene found, which durst openly inuey against their hipocrisie and dissimulation, to say nothing of those which haue lien lurking in their houses, & haue thought it great wickednesse, to be pertakers of their superstitiousnesse. Heere in this place, hast thou what to answer the aduersaries, which aske if there were no Church before Luther and Zwinglius dayes? Yes, wee knowe there was a Church, but the same almoste ouerwhelmed and burped, suche an one as we read, was before Christes time among the Iewes, and suche an one as was in the dayes of Helias, when God saide there were seuen thousand left, which had neuer bowed the knee vnto Baal, although Helias knewe not one of them.

Furthermoze, as concerning this present Historie, wee are taught, that although the wicked bee diuersly deuided, bothe in manners and religion, yet they will easily agree together againste Christe and the truthe. For where they all fighte vnder one Prince which is the Deuill, they cannot chuse, but all take him for their ennemie, which specially assaulteth his kingdome. Woulde God that they woulde diligently consider these things, which seeke their cheefe praise and gloze by dissensions and debates, which they practise against the Ministers of Christ, taking theyr naughtie affections vnto Counsell. For heereby they encourage the wicked ennemies of Christe, which thinke it an easie matter to vanquish them, whome they see contend so bitterly among themselves. But hereof we shall haue more commoditie to speake else where.

Paule protesteth he is a Pharisee.

Nowe lette vs see Paule, who perceiuing his bande of aduersaries, to consist of so diuers sectes, deuisech a way by and by howe to set them out among themselves, and sayeth: Menne and brethien, I am a Pharisey, the sonne of a Pharisey, touching the hope and resurrection of the deade I am iudged. Paule seemeth to offende either in crafte, or in denying of Christ and his faith, seeing he professeth to be of the order of them, who it is euident, were the greatest ennemies of Christ. But he may easily be excused. For first he was enforced to seeke suche a shifte and escape, bicause he perceiued he should haue no libertie otherwise to speake, and saw the matter was handled with open tirannie, therefore he had rather haue professed his faith plainly, and haue giuen an accompt thereof, as he began to doe, but being interrupted, he taketh a newe way.

Again, he confesseth not alloweth not the Phariseis opinion simply and in all poyntes, but in the Article of the resurrection, wherein they had a

found

sounde iudgement. He ioyneth with them agaynst the Saduces. And what he thought of the other opinions of the Phariseis, and specially of their trust in woorkes, wherein they had suche a pride, his Epistles euery where aboundantly declare. Therefore Paules example maketh nothing for them, which for the more suretie of their life and estimation, will craftily draw backward in matters of Religion, and receyue and allow Articles playne repugnaunt to the fayth of Chryst. Wee are yet taught, that it is lawefull for the godly, being circumuented with wrongfull iudgement, to seeke to escape them, as farre forth as they may doo it without detriment of the truthe: least by ouer rashe endaungering them selfe, they bring the truthe in perill with them. Aboue all things marke how Paule sayth he is iudged touching the resurrection of the deade. Howebeit the poyntes of his accusation soundeth farre otherwise. But he alleageth the resurrection, bycause therein consisteth the principall poynte and whole matter of fayth and religion, as he declareth in the firste to the Corinth. 15. And bicause the whole hope of the Sainctes standeth herein, he sayth he is iudged also concerning that hope. For take away the resurrection, and what else haue the faythfull, wherein to put any trust, bycause in the world they see nothing but crosses and tribulations: Hereby it appeareth what we may thinke of those which deny the resurrection. For bothe they pull downe the foundation of Chyistian fayth, and set open the gate vnto all wickednesse of life.

Howebeit Paules enterpryse succeedeth very luckely. For by and by the Phariseis maintayne his parte agaynst the Saduces, and making a lewdicious noyse on both sides, the Phariseis crie out of Paules side: We find no euill in this man, for if that a spirite or Aungell haue spoken vnto him, let vs not strue agaynst God. And herein verily they speake both mosse godly and truly, and yet they deserue no prayse before God therefore, bicause they made this confession, not for any loue they had to truthe and equitie, but of a corrupte affection of minde. And this is a notable example, teaching vs what partaking is able to doo, for being carried with the sway hereof, they which a little before thirsted after his bloude, become his defendours. This thing vseth to happen many times, both in religion, and also in other controuerlies. But forasmuche as suche iudgements for the mosse parte tende to an euill ende, it behoueth vs diligently to auoyde the same. There are also two things very profitable to be obserued. The first is, howe the consent of the wicked can not long endure. For as they are tossed hither and thither like the sea with vncertayne affections: so God vseth from an high to scatter and scoyne their counsels and deuises, and that can he doo with suche dexteritie and handsonnesse, that sometimes he vseth the helpe of mosse wicked enemies, in sauing of his seruauntes. Thus the rodde and incursions of the Philistines were profitable vnto Dauid, whyle they kepte backe Saule from persecuting him. And in our dayes, we haue seene the Turkes warres an occasion many times of the Churches tranquillitie and quiet. Therefore let not the conspiracies of the wicked offende any man, but let vs put our assured trust of saluation in God. The other is, that they which take agaynst that doctrine that God reuealeth, strue agaynst God. This is an horrible offence, but to common in these dayes. For in defacing the Gospell, both Princes & Prelates

Paules enemies
fall out
among them
selues.

The Cap-
taine deli-
uereth Paul
again out of
the hands of
of the Je-
wes.

of the Church chiefly labour, whereas the sonne of God dyd firste vouch-
safe to reueale it to the worlde by his owne mouth. But at length to their
great confusion shall these Gyaunts feeble how much stronger God is than
they, and how horrible a thing it is to fall into his hands.

Furthermore, these clamours taken vp on both sides, turne to open se-
dition: and the matter proceedeth so farre, that Paule is fayne to be deli-
uered agayne by the helpe of the Captayne and Souldiours, and to be
brought into the Castle, which vndoubtedly were moued therevnto by
God, as they were at the first. Let all magistrates follow the example of
this Captayne, and remember that it is their duetie to succour and de-
fende those that are good. For the cowardlynesse of such is to be detested,
which either care not for the good, or else for mens sakes deliuer them to
be tormented, wherein it is euident that Pylate offended. Let them also
marke, what to looke for, when they commit the ministers of truche vnto
the counsels of Antichrist. For neither they shall be constrained shame-
fully to forsake them, or if they will saue them, to deliuer them with grea-
ter daunger out of the handes of them which make it but a game and pa-
stime, wickedly to breake publique Lawes and promyses. An example
hereof appeareth in Sigismunde the Emperoure, circumvented with the
crafte and tyrannie of the Councell of Constance, when he was not able
to deliuer Iohn Husse out of their handes, sente for out of Boheme by his
letters of safe conduct, and vpon the fayth of an Emperour. Howbeit
howsoever thinges fare in the worlde, let vs imitate Paule, and constant-
ly defende the truche, and Jesus Christ our Sauour and redeemer shall
not faile those that bee his: To whome bee blessing, honour, power and
glory, for euer. Amen.

The. Cxlix. Homely.

THE night following God stode by him, and sayde: Bee of good
cheere Paule, for as thou hast testified of mee at Hierusalem, so must
thou beare witnesse also at Rome. And when it was day certayne of the
Iewes gathered them selues togyther, and made a vowe, saying: That
they woulde neyther eate nor drinke tyll they had kylled Paule. They
were more than fortie men, which had made this conspiracie. And they
came to the chiefe priestes and Elders, and sayde: Wee haue bound out
selues wyth a vowe, that wee wyll eate nothing vntyll wee haue slayne
Paule. Nowe therefore giue you knowledge to the vpper Captayne, and
to the Counsell, that bee bring hym forth vnto vs to morrowe, as
though wee woulde knowe something more perfectly of him. But wee
for euer he come neere, are ready to kyll him. When Pauls sisters sonne
hearde of their laying awayte, he went and entered into the Castle, and
tolde Paule.

Paule



Paul the Apostle in his seconde Epistle to the Corinthians, the first Chapter, sayth: As the afflictions of Chryst are plentyfull in vs, euen so is our consolation plentyous by Chryst. This is a worthy and comfortable saying, confirmed with many examples, euen from the very beginning, vnto the which this example here present tolde of Paule, may very well be aduyned. For we haue heard how he was hitherto vexed and molested with greuous perilles and daungers. And many thinges happened vnto him, whiche mighte haue driuen him to desperation, beeing laide in prison by the Romane Souldiours, and with one whole consente of the Jewes required to be put to death, and sawe none other helpe or succoure but suche as he founde in the Souldiours, men farthest off from true Religion. But the Lorde sayleth not hys Apostle beeing in this daunger and distresse, but most friendly comforteth him beeing tossed by and downe wyth dyuerse cares, and by and by performeth in deede that which he promyseth in words, whyles in miraculous sort he deliuereth him out of the handes of most cruel cutthrotes. Nowe bicause these thinges are writte for the instruction and comforte of all people, let vs marke euery poynt thereof in order.

The first thing herein is a consolation, wherewith Pauls minde is confirmed & strengthned. For the Lorde standeth by him in the night, that is to say, by his angel to teach him how true it is that he sayd, he wold be with vs vntill the end of the world. And he biddeth Paule to be of good cheere, or to take a good harte vnto him, bicause perhaps he began to doubt of Gods care and good will towards him. And the cause he sayth to be, for that he muste beare witnesse of him at Rome also. Here it moste euidently appeareth, tht God neglecteth not mens matters and affayres, although he seeme sometymes to forget them. For howe can he neglecte men, who forgetteth not the Sparrowes, as Chryst testifieth. Luke. 12. In deede it might seeme that God had no regarde of Paule, considering howe all the worlde conspired agaynst him. But seeyng God standeth by hym in prison, it easily appeareth, that nothyng hath happened vnto hym hyther vnto, eyther wythout the knowedge of God, or without his will.

But bycause wee haue examples heereof in euery place, lette vs nowe consyder the manner of Consolation: the bare wordes whereof beeyng wayed after the capacitie of mannes reason, seeme to declare that GOD rather threateneth hym, than comforteth hym. For hee saythe: Bee of good cheere Paule: for as thou hast testified of mee in Hierusalem, so muste thou also beare wyttesse at Rome. Therefore the Lorde giueth him warning of newe trauelles, and newe contentions: lyke as if a Whistian shoulde say to a sicke body: be of good cheere (O sonne) for thou hast newe sicknesses comming, and within these fewe dayes thou shalt haue freshe doloures and greefes. Or, as if one should encourage a Souldiour weeryed in a late skymish, vnto a more greuous fyghte. Who woulde say this were a consolatyon or comforte? Howe bee it suche a lyke thyng it is that is here sayde vnto Paule. For by making mention of Rome, he putteth him in remembrance of tediousnesse in iourneys, of perils in nauigation, and of a number of most cruell kinds of punishment: forasmuch as Claudius was now Emperour,

a very

God com-
forteth
Paule.

The manner
of Gods
comforting.

a very foolish and cruell man, and most ready to punishe guiltlesse persons. But if wee waigh the matter deeply, it shall appeare there were two things which might not a little encourage Paule: the one was, that he perceiued God had a care of him. The other, that he heard he shoulde be a vessel and instrument of glory, to declare the name of Chryst among the Romanes also, who were Lordes of the whole worlde. Here therfore we are taught, whence to fetch the comforte in aduersitie. Not in the fortunate successe of worldly fayres, or of hope to lyue idelly and easily, but of the prouidence of God, and of that he doth bouchsafe to make vs vessels and instruments of his glory. And this thing Chryst teacheth vs, where he promisseth to his disciples not prosperous successe of their attempts, but sayth, nothing shal happen vnto them without the counsell of Gods prouidence. We are taught also, that whyle God deliuereth & comforteth vs, he calleth vs not to idlenesse, but prepareth vs to greater businesses. And he therfore recreateth vs with the taste of his truthe and promises, to make vs to returne to our businesse agayne the more chertfully, as we may see all godly men ble to doo. Therefore it is a shamelesse errour of them, which after they haue tryed the ayde and helpe of God, clayme vnto them selfe a certayne immunitie and freedome from all perilles and labours, or else giue them selues altogether to the desire of the flesh, and follow an vnbridled licentiousnesse both in saying and dooing.

God confir-
meth hys
consolation
by dares.

Furthermore, bycause the Apostle was like to be molested with many perilles before he came at Rome, God confirmeth hys late courage and manlynesse with a freshe benefite, deliuered him out of a great and vnlooked for hazarde. For there had fourtie persons conspired his death, and had made a bowe, that they would neyther eate, nor drynke, tyl they had killed him. In whose wicked enterpryse, a man cannot tell, whether he may more wonder at their audacitie, or bloudie myndes. For beside that they intend and meane the deathe of a guiltlesse bodie, whiche is contrarie to the Lawe of God, they bynde themselues with an othe and bowe, beeing not ignorant, how many things myght happen or chaunce, that might hinder and dash all their attempt. But by their example, wee learne to iudge of the boldenesse and audacitie of the wicked, and of all them which meane to defend the Religion they professe, by force rather than by Scripture. But lette vs returne to these botaries agayne, who declare their bloudie intent vnto the Priestes and Counsell, thinking to haue greate thanks at their handes, and desiring to haue them partners of their enterpryse. Giue you (say they) knowledge to the Captaine, and to the Counsell, to bring him forth vnto vs to morrowe, as though wee woulde knowe something more perfectly of him, and wee will be readie to kyll him or euer he come neare. Heere appeare the craftes and traynes of the wicked, and howe farre the hatred of truthe proceedeth. These men professe a zeale and auncient Religion, and can wonderfully counterfet Justice, yet in the meane season they can conceyue a deuice in their mynde, boyde both of all reason and Justice. Howbeit Sathan hath leste this pollycie also in remembraunce, for posteritie, where it hath been seene, howe the Ministers of Chryst being oftentimes called forth vnto Disputations, haue fallen into the handes of Murtherers. And there want not examples of our age, which teache vs to be afrayde of such sleightes in these dayes also. Agayne, consider what
great

great corruption there was at this time among the people of the Jewes, seeing men durste declare so wicked an enterprize vnto the Priestes and Elders, who they knewe vndoubtedly would ioyne with them in their doing. Therefore they were all worthy miserably to perishe togyther. Which thing let all them looke for likewise, which in these dayes labour to gratifie Antichrystes Priestes, with shedding of innocent blood, and banishing of the godly. And yet howe bayne moste tymes their enterprises are, this Hystorie following declareth. For a nephew of Paules beeing but a yong stripling, yet meete inough to interrupte their deuise, chaunceth through the ordinaunce of God to vnderstande their purpose. He declareth all the matter vnto Paule, who sendeth hym vnto the Captayne, and by his diligence and industrie this bloody attempte (as wee shall heare hereafter) was quite dashed and defeated. Thus God thought good to ratifie his late promise, teaching vs all howe easie it is for hym to ouerthrowe the deuises of the wicked. For what are wicked enimies able to doo agaynst him which seeth all thing, and can arme and set foorth weakenesse agaynst them: so he destroyed the wicked tyrannie of Pharao by Moyse, that was throwen away in his infancie. So he deliuered Sifara and Holofernes, moste skillfull and valiaunt Captaynes, to women to be killed. So by the wisdom of Daniell, beeing but a childe, he reprobeth the filthy luste of the Elders and Senatours, and defendeth the honest and vertuous lyfe of Susanna. And here in this place by the meanes of a yong springal, he defeateth such a counsell and deuise as seemed scarce possible to be disapoynted by any meanes, bycause it was taken in hande by moste desperate men, confirmed with the holynesse of an othe or bove, and corroborated with the authoritie of the Priestes and Elders. Lyke kinde of examples are in all Hystories. By them it behoueth vs to learne the power of God, in whom let vs truste, and wee shall lesse feare the tyrannie of the wicked, and beeing bolde in the quarell of truthe, let vs put all our hope and confidence in God onely, through Iesus Chryste our Lorde: To whome bee blessing, honour, power and glory, for euer and euer. Amen.

The. Cl. Homelie.

AND Paule called one of the vnder Captaynes to him, and sayd: bring this young man vnto the highe Captayne, for he hath a certayne thing to shewe him. And he tooke him and brought him vnto the high Captaine and sayde: Paule the prisoner called mee vnto him, and prayed mee to bring this young man vnto thee, which hath a certayne matter to shewe thee. The highe Captayne tooke him by the hande, and went with him out of the way, and asked him: what is it that thou haste to tell me? And he sayde: The Iewes are determined to desire thee, that thou wouldest bring forth Paule to morrowe to the Councell, as though they woulde enquire somewhat of hym more perfectly: but followe not thou theyr myndes, for these lye in wayte for him of them more than fortie men,

which haue bounde them selues with a vowe, that they wyll neyther eate nor drynke tyll they haue kyllled hym. And nowe are they ready, and looke that thou shouldest promyse. The vpper Captayne then let the young man departe, and charged hym, saying: See thou tell it out to no man, that thou haste shewed thys thing to mee. And hee called vnto him two vnder Capiraynes, saying: Make ready two hundred Souldiours to goe to Casarea, and horsemen threescore and tenne, and speare men two hundred, at the thirde houre of the nyghte, and delyuer them beastes that they may sette Paule on, and bryng hym safe vnto Felix the hyghe Deputie.



Although God neuer forsaketh hys electe, but according to hys promyses is at hande wyth them al wayes, and in all places: yet hee mixeth many tymes aduersitie wyth prosperitie, bycause it is very profitable so to haue the m kepte in dooing their duetie, and to exerceple their fayth, that they may learne to depende onely vppon hym, and to ascribe all prosperitie vnto hym alone. Many examples heereof are euery where. But chiefly in the Hystories of Moyses, David, and others, wherevnto thys example tolde heere of Paule, may worthely bee referred. For wee haue hearde howe God appeared vnto him, beeing greuously and many wayes tempted, and effectuously comforted him, promising hym, that he shoulde not onely escape the handes of the Jewes, but also shoulde beare witnesse of hym at Rome. But lo, or euer it was scarce day, forty men conspire hys death, and taking the Priestes and Elders to counsell with them, so deuise the matter, that it seemeth impossible for him to escape. This appeared vtterly to be contrary to the promise of God: yet bicause Paule is not ignoraunt of Gods blage and custome, he is neyther feared with the mention of todayne daunger, nor God sayleth not of hys promyses: yea where he least hoped for it, God sendeth hym ayde and assistance, as wee shall now see. The vse of all these things is, that wee should confirme our fayth heereby, and not caste off our hope when wee see the successe of thynges not agreable vnto Gods promyses. For although the Lorde linger and tarry, yet can he not forget vs continually. But that we may receiue the more vtilitie heereby, we muste diligently consider euery person.

Paul requi-
reth help of
the Capten.

First of all commeth Paule forth, who although he were confirmed wyth the Oracle, yet hee boasteth not foolishely of Gods promyse and providence, and setteth not all daungers lyghte, but prudently taketh holde of that one meane that remayned in man, and which hee myghte safely vse wythout breach of Religion and Christian faythe, hauing a care how to make the Captayne vnderstande all the matter by his Nephew: that he beeing admonished of his duetie, might conuey him from the bloudy handes of these conspiratours. And bycause the matter might seeme of more importance, and not bee suspected by reason of the age of the strippling, he ioyneth a Centurion with him, to be his spokesman & intercessor. By which example we are first taught howe we should vse the providence and promyses of God in aduersitie. For we muste not doubt but

God

God by his eternal prouidence and counsell ruleth al things, and the same can be stopped or hindred by no endeour of any enemies. For he useth to scatter the counsell of Nations, but his counsell (as David sayth) endureth for euer. Agayne, he promisetly to bee with his people, and to assiste them in all aduersities, whose promises wee must assuredly beleue. In the meane season, the remedies and meanes, which both are lawefull of them selfe, and offered of God, muste by no meanes bee despised or neglected, least by putting our selues ouer rashely in daunger, wee seeme to tempt God. For the same muste be obserued in al our doings, that is bled in tillage and husbandrie. For although all the encrease thereof cometh of God, yet no man ought to neglecte husbandry without the great contempt of God. Thus we read David bled somtimes to flie, and somtimes other meanes which God offred, very holply, although he nothing doubted of the truthe of God, which promised him the kingdome. Likewise did Ezechias: yea Chryst him selfe sicked not to flie, while he knew his houre was not yet nigh: neither would he cast him selfe downe from the pynacle of the Temple, at Sathans bidding, although he alleaged the promise of God, which was of most authoritie with Chryst. Yea he furnissheth hys disciples with most large promises, yet he warneth the same diligently to beware of men. Therefore the errour of suche as abuse the prouidence of God to maintayne their temeritie and licentious boldnesse, and vnder pretence hereof wickedly contemne not only al forecast & wisdom, but suche meanes beside as God hath ordeined, is both shamefull and wicked. Wee must rather auoide the inconuenience of distrust, least we be overcome thereof, and turne vnto vnlawfull meanes: but in the meane while, bling the lawfull meanes prouided of God, let vs comit al the successe vnto the good and holy will of God. For so shall we walke safelyest in the middle of the way, auoyding as well too much confidence as diffidence, as Paule doth in this place both wisely and godly, and therefore is allowed of God. This example teacheth vs moreouer, that it is lawfull for godly and christian people to demaunde ayde of the Magistrates, and to besch them of armed defence if neede shall so require. Neither are suche men to be harkened to, that say Chrystes kingdome must not be set forth by warre, seing we are commaunded not to resiste euill. For we do not aske lawfull defence of the magistrate, because our meaning is by fight to enlarge Chrystes kingdome, but require his office & duty, which if he be a good magistrate, he ought not to deny vs, & which the godly people may vse without the breach of faith & religion. For it is euident that magistrates are appointed of god, & that for good purpose, & that the sword is not in bayne committed to them of God. Reade Rom. 13. And God promysed by Esay, that kinges should be Nourices of hys Church. As touching Chrystes precepte, forbidding vs to resiste euill, he mente not thereby to take from the Magistrate his lawfull function, but forbiddeth priuate men greedy desire of reuengement, which bled to violate and breake publike lawes, and disturbeth all kind of amitie, peace & friendship. Therefore Paule doth wel in seeking the Captaynes ayde, and he refuseth not the armour of the souldiours, whereby he saue the craftie awaytes of the Jewes mighte be preuented and repressed. And he had bene in no faulte if the Souldiours and Conspirators had met and committed slaughter on both sydes: but rather all the faulte

Psal. 33.

Math. 10.

Confidence
& diffidence
are two ex-
treames in
eche kinde.

The Centu-
rion curte-
ously accom-
plisheth
Pauls re-
quest.

The capten
is ready to
aide and as-
sist Paule.

shoulde haue light vpon those wicked persons which were the beginners of so wicked an enterprise. But if it were lawful for Paul to vse the defence & safeguard of the Romane garrison, then doubtlesse are they very seuerer controllers of the faith which blame Ministers in these dayes, that seeke the ayde and succour of christian Magistrates, and require of them that duetie that an Heathen Captayne thought was not meete to deny to the Apostle of Chryst.

But let vs let Paule passe, and come to the Centurion, whose interest on he vsed. He calleth hym vnto hym, and desireth him to bring the yong strippling vnto the bypper Captayne, which he accomplisheth very gently and readily. For God bleth to get his people fauour in the sight of straungers, and by his secret working procureth them the good will of men. So Ioseph in time passe was in great fauour with Potiphare. And we reade that the Israelites easily obtayned of the Egyptians the costliest things they had, because God had gotten his people fauour in their sights. These things ought to make vs desirous of godlinesse, because we see that the more duetifull we shewe our selues to bee vnto God, the more gentle and fauourable we fynde men vnto vs. For God can easily at his pleasure get vs the good will of men. Also we must imitate this Centurion after his example, willingly to helpe those that be in affliction or calamitie. Reade Math. 23. But O the detestable wickednesse of our dayes, where men are growen into suche brigodlynnesse, that a man shall scarcely obteyne of Christians that that Paule so easily obteyned of an Heathen souldiour. For many now a dayes are ashamed of the Captiue for Chrystes sake, and for this cause onely regarde them not; least by dooing any thyng in their cause, they should runne in suspition themselves.

But let vs see what the Captayne dyd in Paules cause, where in an heathen man appeare tokens of singular vertues, God doubtlesse working in his minde, which ment to deliuer his Apostle out of the hands and awaytes of these conspiratours. First he bleth a singular curtesie, not repelling the strippling that came vnto him, nor scowning when he herd the name of the Captiue, but taketh him by the hande and leadeth him aside, and asketh him friendly wherefore he was come. Which example all men in office and authoritie ought to vse, seeing this is not one of the least commendations in them, to let all men haue an easie accesse vnto them, and to heare their Subiectes causes gently and patiently. For in so dooing they resemble the propertie of God, who of his own voluntary and accorde calleth vs, and hath his eares open alwayes to the prayers of the afflicted. And doubtlesse, where a number for feare or shame can not declare their mindes before men in authoritie, it behoueth to encourage them with signification of humanitie and good will, that their preposterous shame or feare hinder them not. Agayne, the Captayne ioyneith wisdom with curtesie, which may hereby be perceyued, that he easily beleueth the yong man, although there were many things which might haue caused him to suspect the message. But where he had many times before perceyued the maliciousnesse of the Iewes, and by their first proceedings easily vnderstoode what hatefull myndes they bare vnto Paule, he easily suspected there might be suche among them as the yong man described: Yea suche was his humanitie, that he disdained not to be counseled by the yong man,

warning

warning him, that he shoulde not bring Paule out vnto them. Here haue Princes and Rulers also what to imitate. For as ouermuch credit which hath in it a kinde of lightnes, is to be auoyded, so must they not be to hard of credit, specially if they heare probable reasons alleaged. But rather let them wisely and with present mynde, be ready at all assayes, lest (as it oftentimes happeneth) with their hardnesse of beleefe, they bring either theyr common weales, or els good men in hazarde and daunger. Finally, we may see great industrie and diligence in this Captaine, seeing he omitte nothing making for this present busines. For he wysely requyrez the yong felowe to saye nothing of the matter, least the betwraying thereof might giue the Conspiratours an occasion to take a new way and deuise. Next, he sendeth for two Centurions, and biddeth them make ready such a bande of men, as might suffice for his purpose. He commaundeth also to prepare beastes for Paule to ryde on. Furthermore, he appoynteth the nyght to carry him in, for auoyding of tumulte. And giueth them in their hands letters of commendation, to Felix the President. All which things coulde not be done without great labours and expences. But he remembering his office, spareth neyther for paynes nor charges, to deliuer a prisoner, as yet conuict of no crime, out of the handes of murtherers. The lyke industrie must Christian Magistrates vse, in the defence of good men, forasmuche as it is playne, that they are cheefly ordeyned for that ende. But the example of this Ethnicke reprooueth both the negligence and iniquitie of a great many persons which had leefe to deliuer an hundred ministers of the worde to be slaughtered, than they would take such paynes, and be at suche costes for their sake. Yet let the vnthankfulnesse of this age, feare no man from doing his duetie faythfully. For although men cease from doing their partes, and that there appeareth no helpe in them, yet will God neuer fayle of his promise, which bleseth to take those that worship him, out of a thousande daungers, and that by meanes vlooked for, and will bring them at length to the inheritaunce of heauen, through his sonne Iesus Christ, to whom be prayse, honour, power and glory for euer. Amen.

The. Clj. Homelie.

ANd the Captayne wrote a letter after this maner: Claudius Lissias, vnto the most mightie Ruler Felix, sendeth greeting. This man was taken of the Iewes and shoulde haue bene killed of them. Then came I with Souldiers and rescued him, and perceyued that he was a Romane. And when I would haue knowen the cause wherfore they accused him, I brought him forth into their Counsell. There perceyued I that he was accused of questions of their lawe. But was not gilty of any thing worthy of death or of bondes: And when it was shewed me howe that the Iewes layde wayte there for him, I sent him straight waye to thee, and gaue commaundement to his accusers, that the thinges which they haue agaynst him, they shoulde tell before thee, farewell. Then the Souldiers

as it was commaunded them, tooke Paule, and brought him by night to Anripatras. On the morrowe they lefte the horssemen to goe with him, and retourned vnto the Castle, which when they came to Casarea, and deliuered the Epistle to the Deputie, presented Paule also before him. When the Deputie had read the Letter, he asked of what countrey hee was. And when he vnderstode that he was of Cilicia: I will heare thee sayde hee, when thine accusers are come. And he commaunded him to be kept in Herods Iudgement hall.



Some man might thinke the diligence of Luke the Euangelist superfluous, which he vseth in declaring how Paule by meane of the Romane souldiers escaped awaytes that certaine murtherers had layd for hym, inculcating in hys report therof, euery small trifle almost, to the tediousnesse of the hearer. But where it is euident, that he writ by the suggestion of the holpe spirite, we must thinke nothyng superfluous that is tolde, by his auctoritie. For hereby he setteth before our eyes, the infallible veritie and trueth of God, and the inuincible power, which he vseth in defending his people. For he defeateth not the enterpryse of these wicked murtherers deliuering Paule after anye common and vsuall sorte, according to his promyse, but he so ordereth all the matter, that he byngeth it about, by their helpe, of whom the godly hoped for no such thing, for that they were enemies of the Christian faith, and perhappes of no religion. But bicause God is true he it selfe, he can not breake his promise: And bycause he holdeth the heartes and myndes of men in his hande, it is therefore a most easie matter for him, to vse the helpe of his enemies, in bringing to passe that he will haue done. Therefore the industrie both of the Captayne and Souldiers, must be ascribed to the power of God, which is in suche wyse described, as a man myght thinke they had conuincd as well to deliuer Paule, as the other to kill him. The consideration of all these thynges (as we haue oftentimes declared) serueth for the confirmation of our faith: Which bicause it must diligently be chozed and stayed by, by reason of daylye temptations, let vs see howe Paule was brought to Casarea, to the Presidente of Iurpe, bicause euerye where there are diuers thinges to be founde making for the maintenance and byholding of our weake faith.

In the beginning he putteth the coppie of the Epistle wherein Lysias the Captaine commended Paule vnto Felix. This Epistle teacheth vs among other thinges, what breuitie our auncestours vled, in matters of waight and importance, where now adayes in trifles, men vse too many wordes, whereof none other cause can be alleadged, than for that all faith and credite is buried, in whose steade lying, and false counterfeting beareth the swinge. This letter consisteth of diuers partes, whereof the fyrst is the superscription. This containeth both the name of the Author, and also of him to whome it was written, and declareth who was Lieutenant ouer the Iewes, at that time: Namely one Felix, of whom prophane writers also make much mention. This man, they saye, was of a bonde

The epistle
of Claudus
Lysias, the
Captayns.

Who Felix
was.

a bondeman made free by Claudius Cæsar, and through foolishnesse of the Emperoure, aduanced to suche dignitie, that he passed the Citizens and Nobilitie of Rome in honoures. Yet kept still his seruaile conditions, polluting all places with filthye luste, whozedom, and murder. For Suetonius wyrteth, that he had bene the husbände of three Queenes, whiche he had entred to marriage, partely through the auctoritie of Claudius, and partely by whozedom and baudye. Drusilla, daughter to that Herode whiche was smitten of the Angell, as we hearde, Chapter. 12. he gate from Aniazus, Kyng of the people called Amazi, by the crafte and conueyaunce of a certayne Magitian of Cyprus. He caused Ionathas the hygh Priest, when he thought nothing thereof, to be cruellye kyled in the Temple, by Cutthrotes sent thither of purpose. All whiche are tolde to this ende, that thou mayst see Pauls fortune, vppon whome God permitted so wycked a man to haue power, but yet defendeth him, that he had no hurte done to him by him. We are fooles therefore to feare the power or force of menne, seeyng God is able to bryng downe the heartes of Lyons, and make them to forbeare his people, contrarpy to theyr nature and vsage. Also here appereth what state that people is in, whiche haue abused theyr libertie heretofore, haue plucked the wyath of God vppon them. Suche it is euident, the Iewes haue bene, whom God had not onely endued wth libertie and freedome, but also hadde consecrated them to hys owne selfe, and amongst all Nations, chose theym to be his peculiere people. But bycause they woulde not obeye the holpe lawes of GOD, nor be amended by the admonygements of the Prophetes and of Chrylle, and wyckedly abused their giste of libertie, they are now deprived thereof, and constrayned to suffer suche presidents, as had neyther commendation of Nobilitie, nor fame of vertue, but were defamed and euill reported, by reason of filthye luste and beastlye crueltie. And where yet they woulde not amende for all these plagues, at length they were vtterly forsaken and shut out of the kingdom of GOD. These thynges suche menne oughte diligently to consyder, as now a dayes also, abuse the prerogatiue of libertie, and make of it an vnbrydeled licenciousnesse bothe of sayng, and doyng.

But retorne we to Lyfias, the Captaynes letter, whiche after he had superscribed it, begynneth the narration, with Pauls greate commendation. For he declareth that he was apprehended for no demerite or faulte that hee hadde done, through the vnrasonablenesse and iniustice of the Iewes.

Next, he sayth he is a Citizen or freeman of Rome. At length hee testifieth he is an Innocent, where he sayth he had done nothing worthy of death or imprisonment, and that the Iewes had made this sturre and adoo agaynst him for no cause, but for their lawe and religion sake. This is a singuler commendation, but we muste remember that these are the wordes of a Souldier, and that he speaketh after the maner of the Romanes. For where they desyred the vtter abolishment of the Iewes religion, they cared not whether the presidents defended the same or not. Therefore we see euery where, that they litle regarded controuersies in religion.

But

Iosephus in
his. 20. booke
of Antiqui-
ties Chap-
ters. 9. & .11.

The com-
mendation
of Paule.

But God commaundeth a farre other thyng, whiche appointeth Magistrates, to haue a speciall care of religion: for it is not meete, that they whom God of his goodnesse hath placed in such degree of dignitie, should suffer the honour of God to be eyther neglected or defaced. Yet the craft of the children of this worlde appeareth in the Captayne, which so trimly dissembleth his errour, committed in bynding and whipping a Citizen of Rome, wytyng now nothing, but that that made for the getting of him praise and fauour. Here is cheefly to be marked, what a care God hath of his true seruantes, consydering he defendeth their innocencie by testimony of their enemies. Example hereof we now see euery day, wheras they highly extoll and praise the Prophetes and Apostles, which persecute their faith and doctrine with deadly hatred. Whytherfore feare we the slanders of enemies, or infamie of the worlde.

Nowe remaineth the latter part of the Epistle which consisteth of a certayne preoccupation or aunswere to an obiection that myght be made. For lest Felix myght be offended for that an innocent person was not rather set at libertie, than sent to hym, with suche cosse and charges: He sheweth also the cause hereof, he saith he did thus, bycause of the waites that the Iewes laide for him, which Paule shoulde neuer haue escaped, if he had ben set at libertie. Therfore it behoued in this wyse, sayth he, to provide for the safetie of an innocent, & to see publique peace obserued. Where againe, the example of this Captayne putteth Magistrates in remembrance of their duetie, namely, to take heede, that no man suffer violence or iniurie, because it is euident, they are cheefly ordeyned to the ende that good men should not be oppressed through the insolencie and pleasure of other that are wicked. Reade Psalm. 72. Rom. 13.

Psal. 72.
Roma. 13.
Paule is
brought be-
fore Felix.

It foloweth what successe this matter had, verilye a moste happye, as God ordered it. For the Souldiers faithfully fulfill the charge committed vnto them, and bring Paule safely vnto Felix the President, and he, as though he had chaunged his nature, becommeth curteous and easy to be spoken to, and asketh him what cuntry man he is. Which when he knew, he deferreth the hearing of his matter vntil the comming of his accusers. For the lawe of nature teacheth vs, that both partes ought to be hearde before sentence be giuen: Let vs remember, that all these thinges so happened according to Gods prouidence. For it was his working, that the Souldiers without grutching serued Pauls turne, that they were ready to defende him with perill of their lyfe, that Felix accepteth him more curteously and frendly than his custome was, and causeth hym to be kept in Herodes Judgement Hall, being an honest kynde of prysen. The vse of these thinges is to teache vs that we must not passe much vpon the enterprises of men, but studie onelye to please God, which can mollifie barbarous mens heartes, tame sauage and wyld maners, and turne our enemies heartes to loue vs. Let these thinges embolden vs with inuincible constancie of fayth, to overcome the tyrannie of the worlde, and so to lyue hereafter eternally in heauen, with Iesus Christ our Saviour, to whom be prayse honour, power, and glorie, for euer. Amen.

The. xxiiij. Chapter vpon the *Actes of the Apostles.*

The. Clij. Homelie.

After five dayes, Ananias the Highe priest descended with the Elders, and with a certaine Oratour named Tertullus, which enfourmed the Deputie against Paule. And when Paule was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying: Seeing that wee liue in greate quietnesse by the meanes of thee, and that many good things are done vntoo this Nation, through thy prouidence, that allowe we euer and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thanks. Notwithstanding, that I be not tedious vnto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest heare vs of thy curtesie a fewe wordes. For we haue found this man a pestilent fellowe, and a moouer of debate vnto all the Iewes in the worlde, and a maintainer of the secte of the Nazarites, which hath also enforced to pollute the Temple: whome wee tooke and would haue iudged according to our lawe, but the highe Captaine Lysias came vpon vs, and with great violence tooke him away out of our handes, commaunding his accusers to come vnto thee, of whom thou mayest, (if thou wilt enquire) knowe the certaintie of all these thinges, whereof we accuse him. The Iewes likewise affirmed, saying that these thynges were euen so.



The Euangelist Luke declareth in this Chapter, how Paule was handled before Felix the Presidente beinge sente to hym, from the Captayne, that was appoynted for the safegarde of Ierusalem, as we haue heard before. In the whiche Narration, firste it is declared, howe the hyghe Priest and Elders, layde matter of death vnto Paules charge. And albeit that Paule so declared and opened his cause, that the Lord Presidente coulde fynde no matter of death agaynst hym, yet he keepeth him in pylson two whole yeares together, and bicause he woulde shewe the Iewes a pleasure, leaueth him bounde in pylson still, till Pontius Festus succeeded him in the office. These thynges are declared to this ende, that we may learne thereby: what state the godly are lyke to be in alwayes in this worlde, and howe the worlde continually hateth them, forasmuch as we see the Iewes spare for no labour or cosse, to byng Paule being

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a most faithful preacher of gods word, to his confusion. But as Christ prophesied these things should happen to his disciples: eue so he wold haue y he prophesied, proued & set forth by the exaples of his apostles, y we should be the lesse offended, if at any time the like hapned to vs also. For as the Apostles suffered al kindes of persecution & aduersities: so they teach by their example, what it becometh vs to doo, when we be tried by persecutions & temptations. And this is y cheef vse & end of al this present matter, & of the whole history folowing. But in this place, there is no more rehearsed, but y first act against Paul, all the circumstances wherof, we shal now examine.

Pauls accusers are men of great power and authoritie.

doct:

He beginneth with the discription of the persons, that appeared before Felix the Lieutenaunt. And of one side stood Ananias the high Priest, the Elders, and Tertullus a famous Orator, & greatly exercised in pleading, by reason of his long practise. And on the other syde Paule alone, and in bondes, and for many causes before suspected. In this place appeareth againe (as we haue often times already declared) who are commonly the cheefe enemies of the truthe, and of the ministers thereof, and with what weapons they fight, verily euen they which will seeme to be the greatest mainteyners both of religion, and the common weale: and amongst them, such as make marchaundize of religion. For the historie of the Gospel teacheth vs euery where, that Pauls aduersaries in this place were euen such. And these kind of men for the most part, vse to excell in experience, in wisdom, in vtterance, and in power & authoritie, for the which cause they haue many that fauour them & folowe them. Contrariwise the ministers of truth as they be fewe in number, so commonly they are of small fame and estimation, & contempned and despised of all men, as who seeme of bitternesse of minde, or of ignorance, rather than of godlines, and loue of mens saluation, to withstande the worlde. But that it hath alway bene the godlies happe, in this worlde being but few & despised persons, to cope with numbers in power and authoritie, is to be seene by the examples of all ages. Thus Moses and Aaron were matched with the Magicians of Egypt, who were fauoured and defended with the kings authoritie, and had all the Nobilitie of Egypt on their side. So Elias alone encountreth with foure hundred and fiftie Priestes of Baal, and with almost as many Chaplins of the woodes and groues, before Achab, a most wicked Iudge. And we read that Micheas not long after that, was faine to set himselfe against foure hundred false Prophetes. Here might also be alleaged the histories of other Prophetes, and Apostles, & of Christ himselfe, whiche for breuities sake we omit, bicause they that reade the scriptures hitte on them euery where. We haue rather to consider the ende of these things, wherof we shal receyue great profit & vtilitie. For first, they serue for the instruction of euery mā, that we should not iudge of faith or religiō, according to the multitude or authoritie of the that folow it, as we see now a daies, men commonly do. But if we graunt the this, then shal not only Paule take the foile, who being but one was accused by the priests & Elders, but also al the prophets with Christ & his Apostles shalbe in daunger. Yea we shal prefer y Turks before the Christiāns, which far passe vs both in territories & dominions, in multitude of nations, in victories & other prosperities & successe. Wherfore we must rather herke vnto Christ, which calleth his faithful a litle flock, & saith, y few enter into y narrow gate, but heapes

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praise by example

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vs

rashe into destruction through the broader waye. Againe, the conlyderation of these thinges doth not litle comfort vs that we be not afrayde, although wee alone be sometime constrayned to stande agaynste manye both of great power, glozpe, and aucthoritie. For he that in thys place strengthened Paule, will stande by vs also being in lyke daunger. For we haue large promyses, wherein he promyseth vs the prompting of hys spirite, a mouth and wisdom, against whiche no aduersaries shall be able to resist. See Luke, 21. Mat. 10. Mark. 13.

But let vs heare Tertullus the Oratour, whose Oration consisteth cheeflye of thre pointes. The first is the beginning, wherein he doth not as arteficiously, as craftily, and impudently purchase him selfe beneuolence and good will, partlye flattering Felix to his face, and partlye the Iewes. For they saye, they may thanke him for the peace and quietnesse which they liued in, and for that through his care and prouidence, so many miseries were euery day redressed. Againe, they confesse, they acknowledge this his goodnesse and benefites, with thanks giuyng. Yet do they lye egregiously in both. For we haue hearde before, how Felix gouerned the Cuntrey, as naughtely as could be, how he did infinite things cruelly and vniustly, and in all places where he came, committed Whoredome and Murther, and prophane wyrters abundantly declare the same. Againe, it is euident to all men, that haue but meane knowledge in histories, that the Iewes also, about these tymes, made often and many rebellions agaynste the Romanes. And yet the most baine man is not ashamed to lye, and by praisynge the tyranne, dishonestly betraye his whole Nation, whose commendation he should most earnestly haue regarded. But therefore do they falsely commend their quiet estate of gouernement, to bring Paule the more in hatred with Felix, as though hee were a disturber of publique peace, and tranquillitie. And in them it easely appeareth what the bitterness of hatred is, once conceyued against the truthe. For where the worlde hateth nothing so muche as the truthe, bycause the light thereof reprobeth theyr euill woorkes, therefore it can suffer and beare most cruell enemies, rather than the truth, & they thinke tyrannies tollerable ynough, so they will put to their helpe in oppressing the truth. So they preferred Tiberius Caesar, a cruell and voluptuous tyrant, before Christe our Saviour, when they sayde they had none other king but Caesar. Yea, they were not ashamed to preferre Barrabas a Murtherer, and Captaine of a secte of Rebels, before Christ. And this vntowarde and peruerse inudgement is no newe thing in the worlde. For we reade that the Israelites in the wilderness in time past, offended and withstode Moses likewise maruellously commending the seruitude of Egypt by reason of the Melons, Ammonds, garelke, fleche, & such like things, that land did abound in, and disdained that state of life in the which euery houre God declared new tokens of his beneuolence & good will, like most miserable & vnhappy men. And would God we had not the like examples in our daies, where me wonderfully extol the great peace we liued in, in tyme of popery, & saye the preching of the gospel hath marred altogether, but in the meane season they can craftily dissemble the bloudy wars that the Popes haue ben cheefe procurers of this many hundred yeares, and will make no mention, of suche greivances as haue miserablye weakened both the goodes

2
Luke, 12.
Math, 7.

Luke, 21.
Math, 10.
Marke, 13.
The Oration of Tertullus.

1st hath 3
pts
1 flattery
of y tyrant
2 accusation
of pauls
3 proofs by
false witnesses

closet

example

Numc. 11,

reason, then
imagine the
closet doth
most forward

The points
of his accu-
sation.

and consciences of men. Yea some menne haue so farre exceeded in mad-
nesse, that they haue thoughte it better to dallie with their aunciente
enimies, than to abyde the lyght of the Gospell. But these men, shall
once fynde the same true, that the vnhappie nation of the Iewes felte by
the Romanes, not many yeares after they had drinen away the Apostles.

Nowe let vs retorne to Tertullus, whiche in the seconde parte of his
Oration frameth a greuous accusation agaynst Paule, consisting of three
pointes. Fyrste, he sayth he is a seditious person, yea, and woorsse than
the plague it selfe, bycause he troubled and disturbed the Iewes euerye
where in the worlde. And so they put Paule in faulte of that thing, wher-
of their selues were the cheefe doers. For the whole discourse of thys
booke teacheth, that the Iewes were the cheefe mouers of sedition hither-
to, both agaynst Paule, and his companions. For hereunto maye be re-
ferred the sturres and tumultes whiche wee haue hearde were made at
Corinth, Thessalonica, Ephesus, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and diuers other
Cities. Next, they cal him a maintener of the sect of the Nazarites. Ther-
fore accusing him of schisme and heresie, a faulte in all ages compted the
greatest in the Church. Tertullus seemeth in contempt, to call the Chri-
stians Nazarites, as who had but an obscure beginning, and of small re-
garde or estimation. For it appeareth by the first Chapter of Johns Gos-
pell, that the village of Nazareth was of small or no accompt, forasmuch
as Nathanael sayde to Philip, telling him of Iesus of Nazareth: Can
there any good thyng come out of Nazareth? And this is an olde pollicie
of the Diuell, to cause true religion to be suspected, as a vile thing and of
no reputation. By reason whereof, Iuliane the Apostata also sometyme
called Christ and the Christians Galileians. Thereby they accuse him
of polluting the Church, and vnder the name of the Church, they com-
prehende all outwarde kinde of religion. These thinges we at this daye
ought the more diligentely to obserue, that we myght vnderstande what
crimes are commonly layde against the truthe, and not be offended, if at
any time we be called seditious, scismatikes, heretikes, prophanners of
Temple and Images, Church robbers, and subuerTERS of auncient reli-
gion. For as all these thinges ought not to offende vs, so neither muste
we by and by beleue them which impudently burthen innocent and god-
lie men with these crimes.

The confir-
mation of
his accusati-
on.

But bycause they woulde not seeme to charge Paule, with false matter
and accusation, they produce witnesses. Firste, the Captaine hym selfe,
whom yet they accuse by the way, as seeming to importunate, to set a per-
son at libertie, lyke shortly to be punished, according to the lawe. Then
again, they all affirme Tertullus saying to be true. Where we haue to be-
hold an example both of great audacitie and impudencie. For they dare to
accuse the Captaine, and complaine that they are restrained from shedding
of bloud by him, who deserued great praise therefore. So little the wic-
ked repente them of their mischeuous deedes, that they continually hate
them, which hinder or let their wicked enterprises. Moreouer, where
first they were accusers, and next Judges of the matter, now they are also
witnesses, and will be beleued in euery thing, and feare not the iudgement
of God, which hateth and abhorreth all false witnesses, and commandeth
them to be punished by the lawe of Talio, or suffering of lyke. These thinges

Prouer. 9.
Deutero. 19.

serue

serue for our great vtilitie. For bothe we may learne to suspecte suche as nowe a dayes are lyke vnto these men, and shall the lesse be offended if the lyke happen vnto vs. For Iesus Chryst which was oppressed with lyke preiudices, liueth and reighneth, and hath ouercome all the power of hell, and beeing ascended into heauen, derideth the deuices of his enimies, and moste faythfully maintayneth the quarell of his chosen seruaunts. To him be prayse, honour, power and glozy for euer. Amen.

The. Clij. Homelie.

THen Paule (after that the Deputie him selfe had beckened to him that he should speake) aunswere, with a more quiet minde do I aunswere for my selfe, forasmuche as I vnderstande that thou haste beene of many yeres a iudge vnto this people, bycause that thou mayest knowe that there are yet but twelue dayes since I went vp to Hierusalem for to worship, and they neither founde me in the temple disputing with any man, neither ray- sing vp the people neither in the Sinagoges nor in the Citie. Neither can they proue the things wherof they accuse me. But this I confesse vnto thee, that after the way, which they call Heresie, so worship I the God of my fa- thers, beleeuing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets, and haue hope towards God, that the same resurrection of the dead which they them selues looke for also, shall be bothe of iuste and vniuste. And therefore studie I to haue alway a cleare conscience towarde God and to- warde men.



We heard yesterday the poyntes of a most haynous accusa- tion made agaynst Paule, which the holy Ghoste woulde haue diligently written, as it was spoken by Tertullus, partly for that the truth of the Apostolike storie should not be suspected, seeing the wordes of the enimies also are re- ported so truely, and partely bycause we should not be of- fended when we heare the lyke objected agaynst vs, or others, which fol- lowe the true fayth. Nowe therefore let vs heare Paul the Apostle, which after Felix had made a signe vnto him to speake, putteth away all these obiections both boldly and truely. But before we come to the wordes of the Apostle, we haue two things to consider. The one is, the example of Felix, which teacheth vs that in iudgements both partes must be hearde. The other is in Paule, who beeing moste greuously slandered, yet ru- sheth not forth impudently to aunswere for him selfe, nor is not led with suche rage to slander agayne: but abyding till he had leaue giuen him of the President to speake, pleateth his cause soberly and wisely. Let all the godly do likewise, least they cause the truth wherof they stand in defence, to be suspected, by reason of hastinesse and rayling: which many times suche do as will rather satiffie the passions of their minde, than followe the rule of reason.

These things beeing premised, let vs proceede vnto Pauls aunswere,

§ III. iij.

which

Pauls Apo-
logie or de-
fence.

which consisteth in confuting of the objections made agaynst him. In his beginning he getteth him the beneuolence or good will of Felix, yet in such sorte that he priuily quippeth his aduersaries without all foolische kinde of lying and flattery. For he saith he is the willingest to declare hys matter befoze Felix, for that he had many yeres bene a gouernour of thys natio, & for that cause was welacquaynted with their natures & conditiōs. For this thing alway the defendand most desireth, to haue a Judge of skill & vnderstanding, bycause many times it cometh to passe, that they, which otherwise are great fauourers of iustice, offend of ignorance, which daunger Paul confelleth he is not in, ne feareth that Felix can be deceiued by the Jewes, whose impudencie & sedicious minds he wel knew by many yeres experience. Hereof learne we a generall doctrine, that Magistrates must be diligent in vnderstanding of matters, because they can not be excused by ignorance, if it be either grosse or wilfull ignorance. For why should he who is Gods Vicar & Deputie, and hath his iudgements committed vnto him, be ignorant in any thing. Therfore let them remember it is Gods iudgement, and marke wel the properties, conditions, and doings of their people, and diligently examine the circumstances of al causes. For so it shal come to passe, that either they shal not offende through ignorance, or else if perhaps they comit any errour by being deceiued by others, & not of slothfulnesse, their errour may be excused. But would to God they would often thinke of these things, which bragging of their glorious titles & authoritie, giue them selues wholly to filthy idlenes, banketting, dauncing & hunting: so that they know better the caues & lodging of wild beasts, and all instruments of filthy desire, than the maners, properties, and conditiōs of their subiects. Furthermore, this ought we to obserue befoze we leaue off this place, how God would suffer Felix, a most filthy tyrant, to beare rule so many yeres ouer his people. For this might seme to some men a strange matter. But the incurable ingratitude of that people did well deserue the same. For where God had set ouer them singular Captayns & Shepherds, they so disdayned them, that they would not once voutsafe to heare Christ the eternall sonne of God. Therfore they nowe suffer that which God oftentimes had threatned them, that he woulde take from them his helpe, and giue them suche rulers as shoulde more care for their owne luste, and for couetousnesse, than for the common weale of the people. These things may teache vs what al they haue to looke for, which despise either the gift of libertie, or godly Magistrates, or faythfull Ministers of the worde, vnthankfully and wickedly after the maner of the Jewes.

He putteth
away the
crime of
sedition.

But let vs proccede on in Pauls aunswere, and see howe he putteth away the crimes layde vnto his charge. Amongst these the firste is, that they layde he was an author of Sedition, wherevnto they also ioyne the polluting of the Temple, for that they made molle adco aboute thys matter. In refuting of these thinges he is very diligent. For first, gathering an argument of the tyme, he proueth it to be impossible that he shoulde rayse any sedition, bycause it was not passe twelue dayes agoe that hee came to Ierusalem. From which tyme take the dayes that he lay in prysen, and there shal bee but one or two remayning. But who coulde bee able within two or thre dayes after hys commyng, to make an vniuersall sedition in so populous a Citie. Agayne, I came

not

not (sayth he) to make any tumult or businelle, but to worship, and (as it shall hereafter follow) to succour and releue the saythful with the almes which was gathered among the Gentiles. Therefore it is false that they say touching the polluting of the Temple. For I neyther taughte in the Temple, nor in the Synagoges, nor called any assembly of people together. Finally, they shall neuer be able to proue the thinges they haue layde to my charge. Which saying he vttereth with great grauitie: for so he accuseth them, not onely of lying, but also of false witnesse bearing. And it is not disagreeing vnto Christian pacience, to put away accusations made agaynst vs, though it bee with the ignominie of our aduersaries, when wee see the truthe more in daunger, than our owne estimation. But it is much for our learning, that Paule so diligently purgeth him of the crime of sedition. For heereby Ministers learne, that they muste diligently beware that they disquiet no common weales by mouing any sedition, bycause there is nothing more dangerous than the same, and God is delighted with vnitie and conoord cheefly aboue all thinges. But if the wicked, without any faulte of the godly, rayse sedition, for preaching of the worde, or else it rise of vnknewen causes and authoꝝ, then that saying of Ambrose muste haue place: How it is in our power not to rayse vp or moue the people, but in Gods power to mitigate and appease them, beeing rayfed.

After this, Paule commeth to the obiection of Heresie: I confesse (sayth he) that I worshippe God after that maner and way that they call Heresie. But that I should therefore be an Heretyke, or a Schismatyke, I vtterly deny. For I worship the God of my fathers, and I beleue the Scriptures. &c. Here are diuerse thinges for vs to obserue. First, he plainly confelleth the faith, wherof he was accused, & that before an heathen Judge. Therefore it is not meete to separate confession from sayth: nor it is not inough for thee to beleue in thyne heart, that is, to conceyue in thy minde a certayne opinion, but thou must confesse thy sayth in Chryste before men also. For Chryste can not away with such worshippers as are ashamed of him, as hath many times ben declared. Then he comprehendeth his sayth in foure articles, in which all other articles are conteyned. First, he saith, he worshippeth the God of his fathers, meaning him which dealt with the fathers, and whome they worshipped. This is a speciall article of the sayth, that wee should be contented with one God, and make vnto vs no newe or straunge Gods. He is the true God, who in old time traueled with the fathers, and promised his sonne, & in him gaue saluation vnto men. Wherby it appereth, that neither the Turkes nor Jewes now a dayes are the true worshippers of God, because they imagine that God is their God without his sonne.

Secondly he declareth the fourme & maner of his worshipping, where he saith, he beleueth al the thinges that are witten in the Law & the Prophets. And Christ is the ende of all their writings, of whome it is manifeste, that Moyse and the Prophetes bare witnesse. Therefore Paule worshipped God throughe sayth in Chryste, where all the Articles of oure saythe concernyng Chryste, are comprehended. And there is none other kinde of seruice or worship acceptable vnto God, forasmuche as God is made at one with vs by him onely. And whosoeuer honoreth not the sonne, honoreth not the father. Also Pauls example teacheth vs, that God must bee worshipped according to the Scriptures, and not after

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In his fift
Booke. 33.
Epistle to
Marcellina
his sister.

He putteth
away the
crime of
heresie.

How Paule
beleued.
i.

ii.

the inuentions and traditions of man, bicause we are euery where taught that thereby he is worshipped in bayne. See Esai. 29. Matth. 15.

iiij. Thirdly he confesseth the resurrection of the deade, which he therefore expresseth by name, bycause heerein consisteth all the meane of our saluation, as he hath taught in the fiftenth Chapter of his firste to the Corinthians. He acknowledgeth a generall resurrection, not like a number of madbraynes, which draw resurrection to the godly onely. For as the godly must receiue a rewarde of their godlynesse in the laste day: so must the wicked of iustice be punished for euer.

iiij. Fourthly, through the conducte and guying of this sayth, he sayth he labourereth to keepe a good conscience, both toward God and man, which thing is the right fruite of sayth. For sayth iustificieth men: but they that are righteous and iust, worke righteousnesse. 1. Iohn. 3. And it can not bee that they will pollute their conscience with filthinesse of sinne, which beleeue stedfastly there shall bee a resurrection of the dead. Hereby it appeareth what Paules sayth was. And hereby he proueth that he ought to be taken for no heretike. As many therefore as by true sayth worship the God of their fathers, according to the Scriptures, and holde fast the hope of resurrection, and labour to keepe a cleane conscience, both toward God and man, these be true followers of Paule and the Apostles, yea true and right Christians, howsoeuer the unhappie world rage and storne agaynst them. Let vs therefore sicke to this sayth (Obzethzen) and through the stedfast hope of resurrection to come, stoutly passe through all tribulations, beeing sure we shall one day haue an eternall rewarde with Iesus Chryst our Sauour, to whome be prayse, honour, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The. Clij. Homelie.

BVt after many yeres I came and brought almes to my people, and offerings, in the which they found me purified in the Temple, neither with multitude, nor yet with vnquietnesse. Howbeit there were certayne Iewes out of Asia, which ought to be here present before thee, and accuse me, if they had ought agaynst me: or else let the same here say, if they haue found any euil doing in me while I stand here in the Counsel, except it be for this one voyce, that I cried standing among them: of the resurrection of the dead am I iudged of you this day. When Felix heard these things he deferred them, for he knew very well of that way, and sayde: when Lysias the Captayne is come downe, I will know the vttermost of your matter. And he commaunded an vnder Captayne to keepe Paule, and to let him haue rest, and that he should forbid none of his acquayntaunce to minister vnto him, or to come vnto him.



As the holy Ghoste woulde haue the accusation which the Iewes made against Paule, diligently written, that we might learne thereby whereof this wolde doth alwayes accuse the saythfull Ministers of Chryst: so as diligently dothe Luke reporte the apologie or oration that Paule made in his owne defence.

Wherby we are taught how we should behaue our selues in the like case. First and foremost, he answereth very diligently & boldly vnto the crime of sedition teaching vs by his example, how the ministers of Christ aboue all things must be free and cleare from such attempts. As touching his faith, about the which they accused him of heresie and schisme, he plainly confesseth the same, and rendreth a reason or account therof in fewe words; but yet very perspicuous and playne. Whereby we gather, that confession of fayth doth most become the ministers of Christ, which must so be declared, that the reason therof may appeare vnto all men which are led with any feare or feeling of God.

Now followeth the crime of polluting the Temple, in putting away wherof, Paule is very diligent, albeit he was not ignorant that the vse and maiestie of the Temple was for the most part abolished by the comming and death of Christ. And we must not thinke that Paule did beare with the Jewes herein, which as yet reuerenced their Temple too superstitiously, but hath a respect vnto the right vse of temples, which christian men by no meanes can want. For although the maiestie of God can not be included or kept within Churches, neither can the worship of God be tied vnto them: yet outward religion requireth a certayne place where the people may assemble together to heare the worde preached, and the Sacramentes administered. And common reason telleth vs, that places dedicated to these and suche excellent vses, oughte to bee kepte from all kinde of pollution: forasmuche as we read, that Christ once commaunded, that no man should carry any vessel or prophane thing through the temple. And it is very like that he hath little deuotion or religion, which wickedly contemneth or misbeth the places consecrated to religion. Which thing seemeth to bee the chiefe cause wherfore Paule vsed suche diligence in putting away this objection. By this example we also are taught, that the Temples or Oratories of Christians ought stoutly to be kept from all contempt and prophanation. Which thing Hystoriographers report that Constantine the great and other Princes in times passe like vnto him dyd, to their great prayse and renoune.

But let vs see Pauls apologie, which first excuseth him selfe by an argument taken of the tyme. For he sayth, he had bene many yeres from Jerusalem. Wherby it playnly appeareth, that he could attempt nothing agaynst the Temple. Againe he declareth that the cause of his comynge was not for the temples sake, but to bring vnto the neddy brethren of Jewry the almes that was gathered among the Gentiles. See what is written of this almes in the Epistles to the Corinthians, especially in the 8. and 9. Chapters of the 2. Epistle. In the meane season he accuseth the of discartefie & vnthakfulnesse, which so vnworthely intreat one that had deserued so wel of the whole nation, & which brought vnto them a frech benefit and pleasure. We haue here to consider (beside the exaple of christian liberalitie, wherof we spake about the end of the. ii. Chapter) the vnkindnesse of the world towards Christes ministers, which is so great, that it wiltheth the destruction of those that day & night labour for the saluatiō of al mē. Thus we read the Sodomites enuied Lot, for whose sake Abraham deliuered the out of the captiuitie of their enemies. And Moses receiued nothing of the Israelites but raylings & threats, who forsoke the delightes of courtly life,

He putteth away the crime of polluting the temple.

The vnkindnesse of the world toward the ministers of the Church.

and the treasures of Egypt, for their sake. What chaunced vnto the Prophets, and after them vnto Christ our Lord, is more apparant than needeth any long reherfall. But that that hapneth here vnto Paul, is very notable, which after his many yeres trauels, his so many wakefull nightes, and almes gathered in euery place to releue the neede of the poore, hath none other reward of them, whose saluation he earnestly desired, and for whose sake he wyshed to be accursed, but strypes, imprisonment, and all kinde of contumelious handling. Why therfore are we offended at the ingratitude of the world, which being altogether set on mischief, knoweth not otherwise how to recopense the authors of their saluation? But let vs retorne vnto Pauls arguments, which in the third place sayth he was purified in the tēple, & without any multitude of men raysed or vniquietnesse. Wherby agayne it appeareth that he had not polluted the Church. But if Pauls argument be true (as no Christian man will deny) it is also true that the Temples are not polluted by them that are purified. But as many as beleue in Christ are purified, forasmuche as Christ hath sanctified and purged them by his blood, from their sinnes. See the fifth & sixt chapters of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Why then are we called now a dayes prophanners of Churches, seeing we acknowledge Christ our sauour, from the hart, and to our power defend the auncient vse of Churches: which is, to serue for prayers, teaching of the worde, and administration of the Sacramentes? Fourthly, this name agreeth more rightly vnto them, which set holy things to sale in Churches, setting by Idolles, and practising many other things, wherewith it is euident God hath bene offended in all ages. Fifthly, Paule layeth this fault vpon the Jewes of Asia, who as we heard before, were the begymers of all thys adoo, and were nowe absent. For this is the continuall practise of all seditious mates, that when they haue raised a multitude, among whom good men be mooste times in daunger, they secretly conuey them selues away, and stande out of Gunshot, wayting the successe of the matter. Would to God the poore commonaltie would alwayes remember this thing, when suche rakehels as these abuse their dissemperance and boldnesse, to compasse and bring to passe their deuises.

Pauls boldnesse.

Moreover, after confutation of these objections, Paule boldly prouoketh his aduersaries. If these men here (saith he) will pleate the Asians cause, goe too, let them declare what euill they haue found in mee. I know they haue nothing to lay to my charge, except perhaps it bee a businesse made in their owne Counsell, for the free confession that I uttered, touchyng the resurrection of the deade. But with what face can they thus doo, seeing they shall bee enforced to confesse the resurrection them selues, excepte they wyll altogether bee wycked: the confidence of Paule, and hys bolde speeche, which declareth a manifest argument of hys innocencie, is worthy to bee considered. The lyke it becommeth all Chrystes Ministers to haue, and to persuaade them selues, that the worlde hateth them for the truthe sake onely. For thys shall make them constante and bolde agaynst all daungers. See Peter in his first Epistle, the third and fourth Chapters.

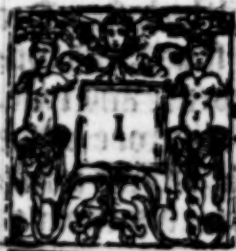
Paule escapeth the handes of his enemies.

Nowe remayneth the ende of this businesse, which was farre other than the Jewes looked for. For Felix deferreth all the matter vnto Lyfias the

the Capraynes comming, both for that he was not ignorant of the things concerning that way, that is to say, stubborne & obstinate controuersies about faith & religion, and of the waywarde and vnclely conditions of the Jewes: but also for that they grounded their whole accusatiō vpon the testimonie of Lyllias. In the meane season he hath a consideration of Paule, whose innocencie he manifestly perceiued. For he commaundeth him to haue rest, and permitteth his friends to come & minister vnto him. For certayne acquaintance abode with Paule in time of his captiuitie, of whose number it appeareth that Luke was: whose example teacheth vs that we must not forsake those that are in daunger for Chrystes sake, seeing that he taketh whatsoeuer pleasure is done vnto them, as done to him self. Agayn Magistrates letne by example of Felix to beware, that for mens sakes they be not to rash in iudgement. For iudgement is Gods, whose ministers they must remeber they are. Therefore let them folow his equitie tempered with long suffering. In the mean season let the not intreat prisoners to vncurtiously, seeing that wicked malefactoris haue some pitie to be shewed on them for humanitie & manhoodes sake. Aboue all things let vs marke the truthe of God towarde those that honour him, & his power agaynst his enemies. For it is his worke that Felix contrary to his nature (wherof we haue oftentimes intreated) is gentle and curteous vnto Paule. And it is an easie matter vnto God, to mollifie cruell hearts, and to get his people fauour with their enemies also, seeing he hath full power vpon all creatures, and euen ouer the hearts of men. Let none of vs therefore feare men, nor doo any thing otherwyle than becommeth vs for their sake. But rather let vs labour to commend our selues and our dooings vnto God, which is able to defende hys seruaunts in the middle of their enemies, to assuage their moody minds, & at length to take vs from al troubles into his kingdome, the inheritaunce wherof he hath prepared for all them that honour hys name, through Iesus Chryst: To whome be prayse, honour, power and glory, for ever. Amen.

The. Ch. Homelie.

AND after a certayne dayes, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla (which was a Jewesse) he called forth Paule, and heard hym of the fayth which is towarde Chryste. And as he preached of righteousnesse, temperaunce, and iudgement to come, Felix trembled, and answered. Go thy way for this tyme, when I haue a conuenient season, I will sende for thee. He hoped also that money should haue bene giuen him of Paule, that he might loose him, wherefore he called him the oftener, and communed with him. But after two yere Festus Porcius came into Felix roume. And Felix willing to shew the Jewes a pleasure, left Paule in prison bounde.



It was a wonderfull and a rare example both of Gods mercy and power, that Paule founde suche courtesie and gentlenesse in Felix the President, whose wicked tyrannie, euen prophane wyrters haue left reported in Hystories. But it is farre more notable that Luke reporteth here in this place. For Paule lyueth not onely in

safetie, but also fyndeth occasion to preach before him. Wherby the truth of that saying of Paule appeareth: which is, that though the Ministers of God be sometimes in prison and bondes, yet his word can not be bounde. For that that happened vnto Paule, the same falleth out in many Martyrs of Chryst also now a dayes, that they which are led bound vnto the stake or fyre, preache the worde of God boldly, to the terrour of the wicked, and consolation of the godly. But let vs consider all the poyntes of this place in order.

Felix & Drusilla heare
Paule.

First Pauls hearers are described, whom if wee diligently marke, wee may playnly gather what the occasion was that Paule was appoynted to make this Sermon. For Felix, which had ben absent from Casarea for a certayne dayes, was now returned agayne with his wife Drusilla, which I thinke was the chiefe procurer of this Sermon. For she was a Jewe, and daughter to Herode called Agrippa, who after he had slayne James the Apostle, was smitten by the Iungell, and suffered greuous punishment for his vngodlynesse and tyrannie. First she was betrouthed to Antiochus called Epiphanes, but not married, bycause he would not be married after the maners and rites of the Jewes. After that she married with Aziarus king of the people called Amazi, from whome Felix the President enticed hir, and caried hir away through fayre promises, and by the conueyance of a certayne Magitian of Cyprus, as before was declared: wherfore she became not only a filthy adulteresse, but also wickedly transgressed the law of God, and the religion of hir forfathers, in liuing with a man vncircumcised. All which things although she had vntoorthly committed, yet it is likely that there was remayning in hir some feeling of that pure religion, wherein she had bene brought vp from hir tender yeres. This seemeth to bee the cause that she was so desirous to heare Paule preache, whose doctrine euery body spake of. Which thing she might easily obteyne of Felix hir husbände, louing hir so entirely. Heere by the way wee may see what remayneth commonly for them which make mariage with wicked persons, and boyde of true religion. For although they beeing blinded eyther with the sting of concupiscence, or bewitched with the glory of richesse and honour, goe about to shake off all sense of religion: yet the sting of conscience returneth agayne, and the desire of fayth so denied and naughtely forsaken, kindleth agayne, but commonly dothe them little good, bycause they haue so little regarde of God, and their owne saluation. Wherefore wee muste thinke that it was not without a cause that God by Moyses commaunded his people to abstayne from mariage with Infidels, bycause he knew they were hereby like to incurre the present daunger of their saluation. For the which cause Paule also willing to confirme the olde lawe, forbiddeth vs to beare the yoke with vnbelceuers. Also it behoueth vs to marke the goodnesse of God, which suffered the worde of the Gospell, whereby lyfe and saluation is offered vnto man, to bee preached vnto those that were polluted with suche filthy luste. Hee is therefore truly that God which desireth to haue men saued, and willet not the death of a synner, but rather that he should repent and lyue. Heerevnto belong many examples of the Gospell, wherein wee reade that Chryste of a certayne singular fauour and familiaritie, offered saluation vnto Publicans and Harlots. Which, as it serueth for our consol-

tion

2. Corin. 6.

tion when we bee troubled with the suggestions of Satan, whereby he calleth the certayntie of our saluation into question: so also it admonisheth vs of our dutie, that we wickedly despise not the grace of god, which he so louingly offereth vnto vs. For as the preaching of the gospel, is the cause of saluation to them that beleue and repent: so they are inexcusable before God, which being without repentance, wickedly contemne it when it is offered: of whose number we shall hereafter heare that Felix was.

But let vs see Paules Sermon whiche Luke reporteth not worde for word, but reciteth only the cheefe pointes: wherof may easly gathered, what he said. These are three in number. First, Felix heareth him entreate of the fayth in Christ. Furthermoze as Christ is alwayes constant in him selfe, & is but one yesterday, to day, & for euer: so there is alwayes but one trade of fayth in Christ, which ought not to be changed. Wherefore we must thinke Paule spake none other things at this time, but such as are confessed else where both in his Sermons, and Epistles. The summe of all which is, that men are iustified and saued freely, without the workes of the lawe, through fayth onely in Christ. And as he laboured to bring the Iewes vnto Christ, from the assiaunce in workes of the lawe: so is it like that he entreated much of morall virtues before Felix, bycause they little auayle vnto true Justice in the sight of God, but are acceptable vnto God, bicause of fayth onely in Christ: bicause we haue occasion euery where to speake of these thinges, we will nowe carry the lesse while vpon them. This marke, how the fayth in Christ, must not be preached in corners and where no feare of daunger is, but must then be stoutly and freely confessed, when we perceyue the worlde offended with vs for the same. Therefore they are not to be hearkened to, which accompt the confession of fayth, among things indifferent. For so they accuse the Apostles and holy martyrs of Christ, of madnesse, whiche were neuer more feruent in defendyng the fayth, than when they sawe it most cruelly assaulted. Also the Anabaptistes are confuted by this example of Paule, which being apprehended by the Magistrates, can scarce be brought at any time to giue an accompt of their fayth, and many times will neither confirme their owne opinions with any argumentes, nor aunswere to the argumentes made agaynst them. Howbeit Peter commaundeth all Christians to be ready to giue a reason of their fayth, to euery one that asketh them. And Paule was so little ashamed either of his fayth or doctrine, that he disdayned not to preache the same, being in bands, before an heathen tyranne and filthie aduultresse.

Secondly, Paule reasoneth of Justice and Temperance. But vnder these two vertues are comprehended the true fruits of the fayth that iustificieth: & Justice we vnderstand in this place to be that, that giueth vnto euery man that is his, and therefore comprehendeth vnder hir, all vertues. Christe commendeth this vertue, where he commaundeth to giue vnto God the thinges belonging vnto him, and vnto Cesar the thynges that are due vnto him: & hereunto is to be referred that, that Paule writeth in an other place: Giue vnto all men that is their due, tribute to whom tribute belongeth: Custome to whom custome is due: Feare to whom feare apperteyneth: Honour to whom honour apperteyneth. &c. Temperance is an impediment or stoppe agaynst vnlawfull desyres, and brydeleth voluptuousnesse, that we be not carried with the entilementes thereof, to sinne

The points
of Paules
Sermon.

Faith in
Christ.

Roma. 3.
Gala. 2. & 3.

1. Pet. 3.

Justice and
Tempe-
rance are
the fruites
of fayth.

Rom. 13.

against God and Justice. Therefore whatsoever might be sayde touching the exercise of vertues and good woorkes, Paule did comprehend it, vnder these two kindes: namely Justice, and Temperance. And these things must of necessitie be subiect to the doctrine of fayth, both bycause they be the true fruites as we saide euen now, by the whiche fayth is known, and also, bicause no man shoulde abuse the pretence of fayth, to cloke his carnall libertie: against the which many thinges are euery where sayde, in the writings of the Apostles. Furthermore Paules prudence ioyned with his free speache, is here to be considered. For he reasoneth of suche fruites of true fayth, as cheefely were wanting in his hearers. For we haue declared before, that Felix did many thinges like a tyranne in gouernance of the prouince, and had more regarde of his priuate aduantage, than of publique Justice. And Drusilla, like a filthie adulteresse married with an vncircumcised person, contrary to the lawe of God. Therefore it was meete, to set these things before their eyes, that they might plainly vnderstand, how farre off they were from the way of saluation. This example teacheth vs what we ought to preache, and after what sorte many men would haue the grace of God, and the faith that iustifieth, only preached. But the wickednesse of this world, and of our age, wherby we see all men euery where rushe into all kinde of mischefe, requireth a farre other thing. Therefore these things must be reprobued, least we preach the grace of God in vaine to them that yet vnderstande not what neede they haue thereof. And we must not regarde, what the world would haue, but what Christ commaundeth, which would haue repentance first preached in his name, and then forgiveness of sinnes. Luke. 24. Therefore they do neither godly nor wisely, which teaching only the grace of God, and faith that iustifieth, before this vnrepentant world plant a licentious kinde of life, causing men to liue in all kinde of securitie and carelesnesse. But rather let them bothe be ioyned together, that men being conuicted of their wickednesse, may repent, and learne to seeke forgiveness of their sinnes, in the onely grace of God, through faith in Iesus Christ.

3. The later
iudgement.

Thirdly, Paule disputeth of the later iudgement, namely to confute that error, wherwith the Gentiles being most deceiued, and made carelesse, beleued the world to be euerlasting. Whereof sprang the opinion of Epicure, that said how God regarded no things done vpon the earth: Wherefore it was very needefull, to speake of the ende of the world, and of Christs last comming vnto iudgement, least that which hee had spoken of iustice and temperance, might seeme foolish and to no purpose. We are taught, that this Article of the faith, is most worthy to be marked, wherby we beleue that Christ shall come to iudge the quicke and the deade. For it comforteth the weake, which are offended at the proceeding of this world, while they beholde howe the vngodly ruste in prosperitie, and howe the godly are punished and afflicted. For they learne that there shall be one day a chaunge, for the which cause, Christ calleth his comming, the day of our redemption. Againe, there is no more affectuous way to moue men to do their duetie, and to refraine from sinne, than when that day and seuer countenance of the iudge is set before their eyes. Which is the cause that we heare Christ so often make mention thereof, and the Apostles for the moste parte take their argumentes of exhortation and behoortation

from

Luke. 21

from the same.

Nowe remaineth it for vs to see the effecte of Pauls Sermon, which touching Felix, was altogether in vaine. For in deede he is feared with the mention of these things, but hee thinketh neuer the more of any amendment. For he sendeth Paul from him, as though he had no leisure to heare him any longer. This is the blage of the vngodly, which sometime for curiositie sake, will heare the woorde, and are so farre affected therewith, that for feare they tremble in their consciences. But these are yet no tokens of a better disposition, bicause the Apostle testifieth, that the Diuels vse so to doe. Iames. 2. For as soone as they perceiue that the woorde of God agreeth not with their humours and desires, they disdaine any longer to heare it. So Achab hated Micheas, bicause hee neuer spake suche things as pleased him. Furthermore Felix bewrayeth hys reprobate minde againe, by an other argument. For he looked to haue had money at Pauls hande, and purposed not to lette him goe withoute some meede, whome yet he knewe of right ought to be sette at libertie. Therefore he had lawe to sell, the cause whereof was couetousnesse, which all other nations did reprehende in the Romaines, as a thing insatiabie. Lette Magistrates learne by this filthie Example, to beware of taking bribes in iudgement, which by the testimonie of God, bleth to blinde the heartes of the wise, and to peruert the wayes of the iuste. Exodus. 13. Deuterono. 16. This couetousnesse hath beene the destruction of mosse flourishing common weales, and what hurte it dothe euery where nowe a dayes daily Examples aboundantly declare. But Felix yet maketh not an ende of sinning. For perceiuing that Paule (which would neither burthen the brethren, nor giue any ill example) was slacke in offering of mony, he seeketh an other aduantage of the innocent. For when Festus his successor came, and he must giue by his office, he leaueth Paule in prison, to the ende hereby to pleasure the Iewes, whom he had many wayes greuously offended, where we may see in what state the godly are, whose pacience the wicked abuse to their pastime, and seeke occasion by them, to gratifie one another. So Pilate and Herode wickedly agreed together to vex and molest Christ. So the father of Drusilla beheaded Iames with the sword, and when hee sawe it liked the Iewes, he went about to put Peter also to deathe for their sake. But the wicked haue not alwayes that they desire, whom although the vengeance of God punisheth not by and by, yet he recōpenseth his

slackenesse with the more greuous punishment at length. It

shall be our partes by Pauls example, to learne to be con-

stant in faith, and to be patient in continuall afflictions,

that at length hauing overcome al aduersities, we

may triumphe in Iesus Christ, to whome

be blessing, honoure, glorie and

power for euer.

Amen.

The effecte
of Pauls
Sermon.

The

The. xxv. Chapter vpon the Actes of the Apostles.

The. Clvj. Homely.

When Festus had receyued the office, after three dayes he ascended from Cesarea vnto Ierusalem. Then enfourmed hym the hyghe Priestes and the cheefe of the Iewes, of Paule. And they besought him and desyred fauoure against him, that he woulde sende for hym to Ierusalem. And they layde awayte for him in the waye, to kill him. Festus answered that Paule should be kept at Cesarea, but that he hymselfe woulde shortly depart thether. Let them therefore (sayde he) which among you are able, come downe with vs, and accuse hym, if there be anye faulte in the man. When he had tarried there among them more than tenne dayes, he went downe vnto Cesarea, and the next day sat in the Iudgement seat, and commaunded Paule to be brought. VVhiche when he was come, the Iewes which were come from Ierusalem, stode about him, and laide many and greuous complaints against Paule, which they coulde not proue, as long as he answered for himselfe, that he had neither against the law of the Iewes nor yet against Cesar offended any thing at all.



In this xxv. Chapter and the next folowynge, are described two greuous enditements or arraunments, wherof the one Paule susteyned before Festus the new president & in the other he pleaded his cause, before king Agrippa, and Bernice the Queene. The firste is the more notable, bycause vnder the colour thereof, the Iewes had like to haue brought Paule in great ieopardie, which yet through the helpe of God he escaped, who promysed him he woulde be his succour & safegarde, for he must beare witnesse

of Christ at Rome also, before the Emperour, as was declared before in the 23. Chapter. The cheefe ende of all these thinges is to teache vs howe God hath a care for his people, suffering them to be tempted many wayes, but yet deliuering them out of all temptations as long as they folow the vocation, and put all their hope and trust in him. Wherefore these things must cheefely serue to confirme our faith, which thing that we maye doo to our great vtilitie, we will consider every thing in order.

First, here is declared a newe enterprise of the Iewes attempted to oppress Paule by. For when Festus was gon to Ierusalem, to take an othe

A newe at-
tempt of the
Iewes against
Paul.

of

of allegiance of the Citizens and inhabitants there, by and by the Priests and men of auctoritie came vnto him, and accuse Paule, tohome Felix had left in prison, desiring the newe President of his fauoure, that he might be brought to Ierusalem to be iudged, and that they might procede against him, according to the law of their Countrey. But in the meane season they were purposed priuily to waite him by the way, and to kill him. In this place may be sene how vnquiet in minde the wicked are, after they be once inflamed with hatred of the truthe. For where alwayes their naughtie workes are disclosed by the light thereof, it can not be, that they can easily lay away the hatred once conceiued. But rather they boile and frothe in their mindes like the raging sea, busily watching euery small occasion, wherby to extinguishe the light of that truth, which they so hate. And commonly the force of this hatred is suche, that without any regarde many times to their priuate auailles, they only seke and desire how to make the ministers of the truth out of the way, whose doctrine they perceiue so bereth and fretteth them. Both these things may be seene in this present example. For we haue heard howe Paule was in prison whole two yeares. Howbeit neither the continuance of time, neither the miserable state of captiuitie could assuage their mindes, for they could bear with any thing better than with the doctrine of the truth. Wherfore they narrowly watch euery little occasion, & spare neither for pains nor cost, to bring their desire at length to passe. First therfore they begin to make their requests and petition vnto the newe President against Paule, which they oughte to haue made rather in the behalfe of their common weale, and to haue besought him of his frendship towards all mē in general. But they thought by this meane to preiudice Paule, that the President might conceiue he was some publike enemie of his whole nation and countrey, considering they labored so earnestly to haue him punished. And we must not think that hatred of the truthe had so great force in these men onely. For it is the common guise of all that are vngodly, that if they might haue their wish neuer so much, yet nothing is more deare vnto them, than to haue the liues of them who they know wil withstand their impietie and naughtinesse. Heereunto belongeth that, that the Euangelists wrote of Herodias, which when she heard how Herode had offered hir daughter the one halfe of his kingdom, yet she required but only the heade of Iohn to be giuen hir, bicause as long as he liued and preached, she thought hir raigne shuld not only be vnplesant, but all hir life also. Many things of like sort might be reported, and examples euen of our dayes, but bicause they are euery where to be sene, therfore we think good to passe the ouer. Let vs rather marke the vse of these things, which is, that we trust not ouer sone, those which haue once conspired against the truthe. For although they can sometimes trimly dissemble and colour their hatred against the truth, yet the poison therof lieth hidde depe in their brests: as sone as occasion serueth, wil burst forth with might and main. And in these persons hath that saying of the Prophet chesely place, pronouncing that the hart of man is froward & vnsearchable. Again, here appeareth what the weapons of the vngodly are. First they counterfet a countenance of law and equity, in that they require to haue him brought to Ierusalem to be iudged, which might seeme an honest and iust request, both bicause all the businesse began there first, and also for that it seemed not

Iero 17

Luke. 22
Iohn. 8

God scattereth
the
counsels of
his enemies.

reason that they which were so many in number and aucthoritie, should be at so great charges, and take such pain to iourney so farre for one mannes sake. But in the meane season, vnder this faire face of equitie, they cloke an horrible and bloudy meaning, as was euen nowe declared. Lette vs learne by this place, to iudge of those men which now adayes doe the like: wherof a man may euery where finde more than are profitable in a Christian common weale. Verily Christe saith, that these men fight with the power of darkenesse, and therefore are the ministers of the Deuil, which was a lier and murtherer from the beginning. And Paule prophesied that Antichrist should raigne cheefely through lying and open force. Therefore, as many as resist the truth and the ministers therof with violent and treacherous sleights, it is euident, that they fight for the deuil, vnder the standard of Antichrist, with whom (except they repent in time) they shall hereafter receiue the pay and wages of eternall damnation.

Moreouer, let vs see how God disapointed the bloudy deuises of his enemies. For it was his working that Festus consented not to the desire & petition of the Iewes, whose request yet as shall appeare hereafter, he made no smal account of. And surely there were great causes, that might haue moued him to yeld vnto the Iewes. For he might both iustly haue suspected Paule, whome Felix going out of his office, had left in prison, and it seemed that the request which the cheefe of the Iewes made, was not to be rejected: and againe, he might appeare but slenderly witted, if in the beginning of his gouernement, he would procure him the hatred of a whole nation for one mannes sake, and he a prisoner, and of no reputation. But through the secreete inspiration God, it cometh to passe that Festus had more regarde of iustice and of the Romaine lawes than of the Iewes nation. Wherefore he thinketh good to keepe Paule at Caesarea still, yet permitting the Iewes, according to order of lawe, to proceede against him. It pleased God, to teache all them that be in office or aucthoritie, by the example of this Gentile, what they haue to doe in like case, verily to commit nothing either for fauoure of men, or respect of priuate commoditie, but to folowe equitie and lawe, which if it be not kept, it is impossible that common weales can continue in safetie. Therefore lette Christian Kings and Princes be ashamed, both of their lightnesse and vnrighteousnesse, which now a dayes commonly condemne the maintainers of Euangelical truth and faith without hearing, for the Popes and Bishops pleasure: yea because they would seeme very religious, they giue them all power against the faithful of Christ, so committing the sheepe vnto the wolues. They shall one day feele to their great smart, what they doe, when bothe the bloudie Popes shall be punished, and Christ our iudge shall require at the handes of the Kings, his people committed vnto their charge. But here haue we cheefely to consider God the aucthore of all these things, whose working wee euen nowe saide all this was. For where hee had said, Paule should beare witnesse of Christe at Rome also before the Emperours, hee woulde also perfourme his promises, whose counsellors, seeing no subtiltie of manne is able to preuent, it was easie for him to disappointe the enterprise of the Iewes. And where he hath power ouer the hearts of menne also, hee nowe planteth suche a will in Festus, that hee prouideth rather for Pauls commoditie, than for the Iewes.

And

And afterward when he would haue gratified the Iewes, he stoppeth him by another meane from dooing the same. Heere may we take singular consolation, considering we see that wicked men, and such as daunce after the worldes pipe, are subiect vnto the commaundement of God, so that he hath full power and aucthoritie both vpon their bodies and minds. Why therfore are we afraid of their counsels and deuises? why feare we their power? why put we not our trust rather in God, which is able to putte in their hearts, new willes, or else mightily to binde their handes?

But lette vs returne vnto the Iewes, who according to the Presidents commaundement, goe againe vnto Caesarea, and make a grieuous complaint and accusation against Paule, in the description whereof Luke is the Hystory, for that they were for the most part such things, as had bene many times before objected vnto him. Heere we haue to consider the Iewes, the complainants, who first stande round about Paule, being brought into the place of iudgement (which was a thing contrary to the common order in iudgements) euen to dismaye him with their outwarde shew, and with their aucthoritie to moue Festus. This done, they bring out againe the olde pointes of their former accusation, as may appeare by Paules answer. But it seemeth they cheefely byged the crime of sedition, as though therby he had committed treason against Caesar. But although they lay many things to his charge, they were yet able to proue nothing. Paule so pleading his cause, that it appeared manifestly to all men, that he had offended in nothing, either against the law of God, either against the Temple and seruice, either against Caesar. And what arguments were brought on bothe sides, any man may easily gather by the accusations aforesaide. Heere may we see what impudencie and boldnesse is in the enimies of truthe. For what could they more impudently haue done, than againe to lay to Paules charge without profe or testimonie, those things wherunto Paule before had oftentimes answered? Yet where they wanted both argumentes and witnesses, they compasse Paule about so boldly, as if their aucthoritie only, ought to haue preuailed in a matter of life & death. This is the guise of the wicked, that they will be satisfied with no kinde of answeres, but alwayes recourse to their olde slaunders. This we finde true in these dayes, where our aduersaries being conuined with so many arguments, yea now with so many yeares experience, yet they impudently lay to our charge, the crimes of seduction, seditio, blasphemie, and infinite suche like. For why should they be ashamed to lie before men, who are not ashamed to speake against God? but in Paules answer this is worthy to be obserued, that he denieth he hath any wayes offended against Caesar, yet preached he that Christe was God, and procured the people vnder the Romaine Empire, to take vnto them a new faith, which thing Tertullian declareth was vnlawfull for any man to do by the Romaine lawes. How can Paule therfore say he offended not against Caesar? Heere we must know (O brethren) that religion is subiect neither to Caesar, nor yet to any other Magistrate, so that they at their pleasure, may decree what they will therein. For it belongeth vnto God, and according to his word and appointment, it must be ordered. And as Christ commaundeth to giue vnto Caesar that thing that belongeth vnto him: so wil he haue reserued for God also, that that is due vnto him. Wherefore he offendeth not against the Magi-

The Iewes
accuse Paul.

strate, which without purpose of raising any tumult, defendeth the true honor of God, although the Magistrate forbidde the same. For when such Magistrates passe their bounds, and wil encroche vpon Gods kingdom, they are not to be hearde: But rather Peters rule muste take place, which teacheth vs that God be must be obeyed, rather than men. Heere hast thou what to answer to those, which crye out, that we seditiously bring bp many things, contrary to the proclamations of Emperours: and say, that in matters of religion, we must simplie obey our Princes. Whose saying if it may preuaile, then not we only, but also all the Prophets, and Christ and his Apostles with them, shal be condemned: who, it is euident preached the word of God, beat downe superstition, and planted true faith contrary to the commaundements of Magistrates and rulers. There is no cause therfore why we should regard these slaunders: but let vs rather with a cleare conscience holde on in the true faith, and with a pure minde serue our sauoure Jesus Christ: To whom be praise, honour, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The. Clvij. Homelie.

Festus willing to do the Iewes a pleasure, answered Paule, and saide: wilt thou goe vp to Hierusalem, and there be iudged of these things before me? Then saide Paule: I stande at Cæsars iudgement seat, where I ought to be iudged. To the Iewes haue I no harme done, as thou very wel knowest. If I haue hurt them, or committed any thing worthy of deathe, I refuse not to die. If none of these things are wherof they accuse me, no man may deliuer me to them. I appeale vnto Cæsar. Then spake Festus with deliberation: Thou hast appealed vnto Cæsar, vnto Cæsar shalt thou goe.



Here Paule the Apostle speaking of his afflictions vnto the Corinthians, saithe he was made a gasing stocke vnto the world, and vnto angels, and vnto men: that same may cheefely be perceiued by the things which chaunced vnto him in his last captiuitie or imprisonment. For now had he bene foure times presented in iudgement, to pleade for his life. First, before the people at Jerusalem vpon the staires, going vp to the castle: secondly before the counsell of the priests: And thirdly before Felix the President. After which foloweth this newe arraignment before Festus the new President. Every one of them were notable, by reason of the great dangers, that fel out in them, as we haue seene in their places: all which dangers he yet escaped throught the help of god. These things teach vs what power God suffereth the wicked to haue vpon his elect, whom he yet deliuereth with a mightie hand out of all their tribulations, bicause of their faith. Wherefore we must not be offended, if we haue the like happen vnto vs also. And this is the chiefe vse of this place, where we are taught how Paule escaped this newe daunger, where of the President himselfe was the author, bicause no man should thinke that hee was heeretofore deliuered, rather by the benefite of men and power of the Presidents, than by the fauor of God. Let vs therfore consider eche thing in order.

first,

First we haue to consider Festus, who perceiuing that the Jewes allea-
ged no matter but meere slaunders, and that Paule was innocent: yet not
withstanding minded to gratifie the with the pleasure that they requested.
Whereby it may easily be coniectured, that he was eyther brybed, or else
fayre promised, seeing his minde was so altered vpon the sodayne. But
whether he had intelligence of the awayte they layde for Paule or no, it
is euident he dyd vniustly. Yet he cloketh his vniust dealing maruellous
craftily. For least he should seeme to graunt the Jewes any thing, but that
was requisite and iuste, he demaundeth of Paule whether he wyll goe
vp to Jerusalem, or no, and there he promyseth he wyll heare the mat-
ter, meaning onely to get the good will of the Jewes heereby, and to a-
uoyde all maner of hatred and enuy. By thys example wee are taught,
howe easily they are corrupted that wante the knowledge and feare of
God. For where by nature wee are prone vnto euill, euery little occasion
setteth vs on cogge, vnlesse wee be pulled backe with the feare of God,
as with a bydle. Hereof this Festus is a singular examplar, which thus
sodaynly beguyleth men of that notable hope which they had conceyued
of him. Therefore wee muste not put our truste in any suche men. For al-
though sometime they shewe some notable signification and likelyhoode
of vertue, yet not long after they fall agayne to their olde nature. For that
that we see here in Festus, the same the Scriptures report was in Pharao,
Saul, Achab, and diuerse other wicked persons. This place mozeouer tea-
cheth vs, what a plague in iudgement respect of persons is, when we goe
about to winne the fauour of men. For heereby Felix obscureth all hys
former prayse, and of a moste iuste Judge, which he seemed a little before
to be, becommeth a cruell murtherer, going about to gratifie them which
had in their minde deuised the death of an innocent man. We haue lyke ex-
amples in the histories of all nations. Therefore it is not without a cause,
that both Gods law and mans forbiddeth Judges to haue respect of per-
sons. And surely it is meete and conuenient that they which are in Gods
steede, should resemble Gods properties & conditions: whom all the scrip-
tures with one consent beare witnesse to haue no respect of persons.

But what dothe Paule, which seemeth scarce able to escape this daun-
ger: he perceiuethe wherunto the matter tendeth, euen by reuelation of the
spirite, which Chryste promised should be an aduocate to his seruantes.
Therefore he speaketh freely and with strong reasons, refelleth the vniuste
request of Festus. Fyyste, I stande (sayth he) at Cæsars iudgement seat: there
I ought to be iudged. Hereby he declareth that the iniurie should redounde
vnto Cæsar, if he should be taken from his iudgement seate, & deliuered to
the Jewes to be iudged. This ought gouernours of Countreys, & all other
inferiour officers to imitate, knowing that the faultes they commit con-
trary to equitie and lawe, redoundeth vpon those which haue put them in
office, and that they are therefore worthy at their hands to be greuously
punished. Hereof among the auncient Romanes proceeded that severitye
of censure, wherwith they thought good to brydle and keepe vnder the
licenciousnesse of Magistrates. A notable example wherof, Porcius Cato
shewed vpon L. Flaminius, whom he put out of the nûber of the Senators
because he beheaded a certaine condemned person within his circuit, ap-
pointing a time to execute him at the pleasure of an harlot which he loued.

The iniqui-
tie & vnrigh-
teousnes of
Festus.

Rom. 2.
Ephe. 6.
Actes, 10. &c
Paule appea-
leth vnto
Cæsar.

For those most graue and wise men would not haue the maiestie of their Empire to be blemished or stained with the concupiscence of light persons. Nowe a dayes, bicause preachers winke at euery thing, tyranny reigneth in euery place, and the authoritie of Magistrates decapeth euery where: but hereof we shall speake another tyme. Now let vs go on in Paules answer, who sayth in the seconde place: To the Iewes haue I done no harme. Whereupon he gathereth, that it were not reason that he should be iudged according to their lawes and priuileges. Touching his innocencie, he calleth the President him selfe to witnesse, which might easily perceiue the same by his apologie or defence. Thirdly, he reasoneth by a strong argument called a Dilemma. If I haue deserued death, I refuse not to dye: but if not, no man hath power to deliuer me, beeing innocent, to the pleasure of myne enemies. And so when he had alleaged these reasons, he appealed vnto Caesar, both bycause he had no more hope in Festus, and also bycause he knew by warning of the Oracle, that it was Gods appoyntment that he should beare witnesse of Chryste before Caesar also. By which example we are firste taught, that the godly are compelled by no rules of Chistian pacience, to yelde themselves rashly to the pleasure of the vngodly: yea rather it is lawfull for them to auoyde manifest daungers, if so they may doo it with safe conscience, and the obedience which they owe vnto Chryst. Thus where they would before haue scourged him, he put them off by order of lawe, and throughe counsell of the Captayne he defeated the murtherers that had conspired agaynst him. Therefore the errour of them is foolish, which abusing the words of Peter (where he biddeth vs be ready to yelde a reason of our faith to euery one that demaundeth it) thinke the Ministers of the worde ought to be brought before Popish counsels, there to render a reason of their sayth, where no reason is admitted, but playne tirannie reigneth. Whose opinion if it be allowed, then must wee say Paule dyd vniustly, which chose rather to declare his sayth at Rome, than at Jerusalem. But he did therein both godly and wisely, following the Oracle of God, whom the auncient doctours Athanasius and Ambrose rightly followed, wherof the one would be iudged onely at Milane, where he had taught and preached: the other could neuer be perswaded to commit his cause vnto suspected counsels, but thought it more for his safetie and prayse to flee, than to tarry among those, which he knew had long before conspired agaynst the truthe. Moreover, this also is to be obserued, that Paule so humneth this daunger, that yet he hath a diligent consideration of his innocencie. Let all they that are godly do the like, but specially they which are ministers of the Gospel, least while they inconsiderately prouide for their life, they bring their good name in hazarde, and so throughe their occasion cause the Gospell be euill spoken of. Thirdly, he proueth by a new example, that that hath ben oftentimes declared, namely that it is lawfull for Chistian men to wage their lawe, and to flee to the prerogative of Princes, when necessitie so requireth. For Paule, which before had set the priuiledge of Rome agaynst open force, vseth nowe the benefite of appeale, which can seldome be done without some reproche of the Iudge, & much more of the party plaintife. Therefore certayne braynsicke persons abuse the words of Chryst, and of Paule, written in the .5. of Mathew, and in the first Epistle to the Corinthians the sixt Chapter, where the righte

ble

ble of Judgementes is not forbidden, but the desire of priuate and vnlawefull reuenge, and the insatiable luste of contention, which gapeth after other mens goods, and disturbeth all kinde of charitie, is bridled and restrayned. Finally Paules wordes conteyne in them a generall doctrine, chiefly appertayning vnto all Magistrates: namely, that it is lawfull for none of them to commit an innocent to the will and pleasure of others, or to purchase any mans fauour with his death and bloud. For whosoever beare office and authoritie are the Ministers of God to defende Innocents, and to punishe naughtie and wicked persons. Therfore whosoever doo otherwise, they are the Ministers of the diuell, and felowes with Pylate and Herode, whereof the one deliuered Chryst to the Jewes to be crucified, and the other for an whoores sake, beheaded Iohn the Baptist.

But let vs retorne vnto Festus, which beeing moued with Paules sodayne appeale, and seeing him selfe disappoynted of his hope, debating the matter with those that sate on the benche with him, aunswereth at length with angry moode: Hast thou appealed vnto Caesar? As if he should say, art thou so bolde to take Caesar for thy iudge rather than me? well thou shalt go vnto Caesar. He trimly expresseth the blame of the wicked, who although they well know how wicked they are, yet they will take it in very euill parte if a man touche them neuer so little therewith, or make any exception agaynst their decrees. Yet is he much better than many of the Princes of our dayes, who will suffer the faythfull of Chryst to enioy no benefite of law, or publike equitie. And verily the seueritie that the Romanes vsed in administring their lawes, is very notable, seeing that Festus after the appeale that a person of no estimation had made, thought it was lawfull for him no further to meddle in the matter. The force wherof dyd long preserue their common weale, battered and sore shaken with many byces. It were meete that Presidents in these dayes shoulde be kepte vnder with lyke seueritie (as wee erewhyle declared) which thing if the higher Magistrates would obserue, bothe shoulde they be hated the lesse them selues, and innocencie euery where shoulde be the more mayntayned. But chiefly let vs obserue the power and truthe of God, whereby he defendeth his seruants against the assaults of their enemies. Let vs in truste hereof, embrace the truthe with all our hearts, and hauing once taken holde of hir, keepe hir faste, and suffer our selues by no threates to be pulled from our sauour Iesus Chryst: to whom be prayse, honour, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The President admitteth the appeale, although vnwillingly.

The. Clviij. Homelie.

And after a certayne days king Agrippa and Bernice came vnto Caesarea to salute Festus, and when they had bene there a good season, Festus rehearsed Paules cause vnto the king, saying: There is a certayne man left in prison of Felix, about whome when I came to Ierusalem, the high Priests and Elders of the Iewes enfourmed me, and desired to haue iudgement agaynst him. To whome I aunswered: It is not the maner of the Romanes for fauour to delyuer any man that he shoulde peryshe, before that hee whiche is accused haue the accuser before hym, and haue

licence

lycence to answere for him selfe concerning the cryme laide agaynst him. Therefore when they were come hither, without any delay, on the morrow I sate to giue iudgement, and commaunded the man to be brought forth. Against whom when the accusers stood vpp, they brought none accusation of suche things as I supposed: but had certayne questions against him of their owne superstition, and of one Iesus which was dead, whom Paule affirmed to be alyue. And bycause I doubted of suche maner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Ierusalem, and there be iudged of these matters. But when Paule had appealed to be kept vnto the knowledge of Cæsar, I commaunded him to be kept till I might sende him to Cæsar. Agrippa sayd vnto Festus: I would also heare the man my selfe. To morrow (sayd he) thou shalt heare him.



God bleth to exercise his people in this worlde with diuerse and sundry tribulations, but according to his wisdom and goodnesse he maketh them serue to the glory of his name, and to their saluation. A very notable example whereof, is here set forth in this Storie of Paule. For after his apprehension at Ierusalem he had euery day ministered vnto him fresh occasion of preaching. For firste he was permitted to speake vnto all the people standing vppon the staires, goeing vp to the Castle, wherof he neuer had the lyke oportunitie before. After that he protested his fayth in the Counsell of the Priests and Elders, which otherwise would neuer voutsafe to haue heard him. Thirdly, he made along Oration, touching his vocation and office, before Felix the President, which vled many times to sende for him, and to talke with him. At length he gaue an account of his fayth and doctrine before Festus, as wee hearde of late. And hee so declared and opened his cause euery where, that both the Romane Presidents, and the barbarous sculdours might easily vnderstande his innocencie: a thing surely much making to the setting forth of the Gospell. And vndoubtedly suche seedes of fayth were sowne in the minds of a gret many, that not long after they brought forth rare and singular increase: bicause the worde of God (as Elai testifieth) bleth neuer to be preached in bayne. Moreouer the things that follow must be referred to that we euen now sayde: whereby it shall be declared what occasion of preaching Paule had giuen him before king Agrippa, and Bernice, and all the nobilitie of that Countrey. And bycause it was a thing seldome scene, for Princes to heare a Preacher in bandes, therefore Luke thought good to passe ouer none of those things which chaunced in or about the same.

Agrippa &
Bernice.

Firste he sheweth the occasion of all the matter, which was the coming of king Agrippa and Bernice vnto Casarea to welcome Festus, beeing lately come from Rome. And it was no maruell that the king shewed him selfe so officious vnto the President, for it was euident that he had obeyed the kingdome of the Emperour, through fauour, and so helde it, that he muste of force acknowledge the Romanes to be his lordes and superiours. This Agrippa was sonne to Herodes Agrippa, of whose tyrannie & horrible death, it hath bene spoken in the 12. Chapter. And Bernice was

his

his sister, whom (Iosephus sayth) the people suspected to haue vnlawfull company with hir brother. Wherefore to auoyde this suspicion, she married with Polemon, king of the people called Lyfij, from who yet not long after she was diuorced, and returned to hir brother agayne, who trusting in the amitie & power of the Romanes, made no account of the peoples talke. This is a singular example of Gods goodnesse, which dothe vnto us to haue the saluatio that is purchased by Christ, to be preached by Paul vnto two persons borne of wicked stocke, & polluted with incest. For their great grandfather was Herodes the great, which laide wayte for Christ, being new borne, & caused the babes of Bethlehem most cruelly to be murthered. Herodes Antipas, brother to their graundfather Aristobulus, or as some thinke, Alexander, being him selfe also defamed of incest, commaunded Iohn the Baptiste to be beheaded, & scoffed at Christ being sent bound vnto him. Of their father Agrippa, we spake of late, who killed Iames, & cast Peter the Apostle in prison, meaning to haue put him to death also, but that he was deliuered by the helpe of an Angel. Agrippa & Bernice borne I say of such progenitours as these, heare Paule preach the Gospel of saluation. Whereby it easily appereth, that God is not so wayward nor desirous of reuenge, to punish the children for the wickednesse of their fathers: but that his grace is stretched out to al men that wil truely repent and turne vnto him. See what he sayth hereof him selfe in the eyghtenth Chapter of Ezechiel. Wherevnto also is to be referred, howe Christ was peculiarly sent vnto those men, whose predecessors beeing many waies vnkind towards God, flew the prophets that were sent vnto the. And we see in these dayes, that the grace of God, and the merite of Christ is moste curteously offered to meany which haue horribly sinned. Therefore they which Sathan hath taught to doubt of Gods fauour and mercy, as though our sinnes were greater than it, let them lerne comfort hereby. Also let these things serue to instruct vs, that we condemne no man rashly bycause of his auncestrie, seeing that in the generation of Christ are numbred diuerse diffamed persons, so that no man neede to doubt, but Christ chiefly belongeth vnto sinners.

But to refurne to our purpose, let vs see for what occasion Agrippa was so desirous to see and heare Paule. This was (as it is sayde) cettayne dayes after his comming: which by all likelyhoode were spent in pastime and banquetting. For Princes and noble men haue little care of Captiues and prisoners. It is to be thought that Festus had comuned with Agrippa about Paule, supposing to be holpen by his counsell in such a difficult & intricate matter. Therefore he beginneth in this wise to declare the whole matter, but subrilly and craftely, slyly dissembleth, how he would haue gratified the Jewes, as we shall see when wee come to the place. For his declaration consisteth of three parts, wherof we will orderly intreate.

In the first part he declareth what Paule is, what the Jewes requested, and what answere he made them. He sayth Paule was a captiue, left in prison by Felix. Which thing he allegeth for this cause, that Agrippa should not thinke he had caused him to be layde in holde. The Jewes (sayth he) made request vnto me by their Elders & Priests, that I should giue sentence of death agaynst him. Which thing I would not graunt them. For I alleaged vnto the the maner of the Romanes, which was, to giue sentence

Festus communication with Agrippa touching Paule.

of death agaynst no man for any mens pleasure, but first to vse all kinde of search & lawfull enquire, so that the accusers shal make informaiton openly, and the accused shal haue time & place to make his purgation & defence. Verily the custome that Festus allegeth, is very notable, wherby al magistrates are taught, that they must do nothing for any mans sake, contrary to law and iustice. For although humanitie & gentlenesse is a thing much commendable: yet it becommeth Judges alwayes to haue a speciall consideration of iustice. Which thing, both the lawes of God, and al nations expressely commaunde. Surely Salomon sayth, that God hateth him as much that spareth a wicked person, as he that slayeth an innocent. Pro. 17. But the bntowardnesse of our daies is muche to be bewayled, where that that Festus sayth was in vse with the Romanes, hath scarce any place among Christians. For we see it oftentimes come to passe, that the faithful people of Chryste for the Popes pleasure, are cruelly made out of the way without any hearing of their cause. As many magistrates therfore as wil truly discharge their office, must see that iudgement procede lawfully and as it ought. Aboue al things it is requisite in iudgement that the accusers be present, that there be no place for slaunders & backbiting, which many times bzing innocents in much daunger. That done, let the defendantes also haue place to make their lawfull purgation, & let Judges thinke that they haue two eares given them, the one to heare the plaintife, the other the defendant. But specially let this rule haue place, that right and lawe be not transgressed for any mans pleasure. For where Judges be no priuate persons, they must know they are bound indifferently to al men alike. Furthermore, as the equitie of the Romane lawes deserueth to be praised, so the impudencie of the Jewish Priestes is vtterly to be detested, which durste requeste that thing, which an heathen man vnderstoode was neither right nor lawfull. But where they which would seeme to be most holy, and the very pillars of Gods Church, thus dyd, mighte not the Gentiles iustely suspecte their religion? But woulde to God wee sawe not the lyke impudencie in the Monkes and Bishoppes at this day, which vse to make mosse wicked decrees in Princes courtes, and abuse the clemencie of kings, to establissh their tyrannie agaynst the seruaunts of Chryst.

Festus testifieth that Paule is innocent.

In the seconde parte is declared, howe Festus handeled thys matter. As soone (sayth he) as they came hyther, I gaue them audience strayghte way. And by and by I perceyued hee was innocente. For they layde none of those things to hys charge that I looked for: but brought forth certayne questions belonging to their owne superstition, and handled a certayne cause of one Iesus, who Paule sayde, was risen agayne from death. After this sorte speaketh the prophane man mosse contemptuously of sincere religion, which Paule yet handled bothe diligently and at large, as may be gathered by Festus owne saying. In him haue we an example of all those, which contemne and deride the mysteries of the word of God, and specially the resurrection. In instructing of whome, although we little preuayle, no man muste be offended, considering that Festus had so little regarde of those things, which Paule mosse grauely declared. Yet Judges haue an other thing to obserue in this heathen person, namely to heare causes without delay: considering that by vniust dilatozies from

Day

day to day, many men are circumvented: which because they are not able to be at such charges, are unable to prosecute & follow their right. Principally, let vs obserue how Pauls innocencie is confirmed by many testimonies. For first we had Lyllias the capten a witnesse therof. After that Felix. Now Festus. And within a litle while after we shal haue Agrippa to make one with them. And although the wicked priests go on in their accusatiō, yet they confirme Pauls innocencie the more, for that they are able to proue none of those things they lay to his charge. The lyke case were the other Apostles in, as we haue oftentimes seene. So the Euangelistes declare, that Pylate and Herode beare witnesse of Chrystes innocencie. Thys maketh for the commendation & dignitie of the chrystian faith & doctrine. Which who so now a dayes flaundzeth, openly be wozay them selues to be worse than the Gentiles. It appereth also by this place, what a miserable state the Jewes were in at this time, seeing a despiser of all religion had the greatest authoritie among them, and they constrained to pleade their matters of religion before him. And this they may thanke the wicked priests, & their owne wicked ingratitude of, which denied Christ to be their king and sauour before Pylate. The like state are a great many in now a days, vnder the tyrannie of the Turkes: by whose exāple except we repent in time, it is to be feared, that all they that now a dayes disdayne to heare the worde of God, and refuse the iudgement of the holy Ghost touching fayth and religion, will one day suffer the like. Finally, he declareth why he kept him beeing innocent in prison. Namely, because he had appealed vnto Caesar. But here he craftily dissembleth his owne wickednesse, which yet he can not otherwise do, but by beuozaying himself, while he confesseth plainly, that he drave the innocent to such an exigent that he must needes appeale vnto Caesar. For he had not purposed to gratifie the Jewes to Pauls hinderaunce and p̄iudice. he would neuer haue appealed vnto Caesar. But this is a common trick among great men & magistrates, craftily to cloke their owne faults, & then to make men beleue they greatly fauour iustice, when they most transgresse the bounds & limits of the same. Furthermore by this occasion it came to passe, that Agrippa was desirous to heare & to see Paule, which thing was the occasion of a notable sermon, which Luke setteth forth in the chapter folowing. Thus we may see, that through the prouidence of God, those things aduance his kingdome, which we least thought of. Why therfore do we trouble & bere our selues about our owne deuises? Why do we not rather euery one cast all our care vpon God, & do our duty? For so should it come to passe, that we should euery where haue occasion to serue God, and in al our dangers and distresses should haue Iesus Christ to be our protectour and defender: to whom be prayse, honour, power and glorie, for euer. Amen.

The. Clix. Homelie.

ANd on the morrow when Agrippa was come, and Bernice with great pompe, and were entered into the Councell house, with the Cap-
taynes and chiefe men of the Citie, at Festus commaundement was Paule brought forth. And Festus sayde: king Agrippa, and all yee men which are here present with vs, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Iewes haue intreated me, both at Hierusalem, and also heere, crying,

that he ought not to lyue any longer. Yet founde I nothing worthy of death that he had committed. Neuerthelesse, seeing that he hath appealed to Cæsar, I haue determined to sende him. Of whome I haue no certayne thing to write vnto my Lorde. Wherefore I haue brought him vnto you, and specially vnto thee O king Agrippa, that after examination hadde, I might haue somewhat to wryte. For mee thinketh it vnreasonable for to sende a prysoner, and not to shewe the causes which are layd agaynst him.



Although God haue giuen vnto man nothing more excellent and commodious, than the worde of the Gospell, wherein he offereth vs the incomparable treasures of hys grace, and the right way vnto saluation: yet such is the vntowardnesse of this miserable worlde, that it hateth & enuieth nothing so muche, as the same word. Which thing is the cause, that the ministers therof are many times so greuously molested and afflicted, and become (as it were) certayne gasing stockes vnto all the worlde. But bicause we, vpon whō the endes of the worlde are come, should not be offended at these things, forasmuch as it is euident, that the worlde should exercise great crueltie vnder Antichrist their captayne: God therefore would haue vs instructed, partly by propheties, and partly by examples, wherby we might learne that no new or strange thing hapneth vnto vs, but that the Ministers of his word haue in al ages bene so bled in this worlde. And yet that his worde could neuer be extinguished throught any attempts of his enemies, for it endureth for euer, and at al times bringeth forth condigne frutes, as the Scriptures euery where declare. Many examples we haue hereof, and among them this one is notable, that Luke setteth forth in Paule the Apostle. For although he liued in bondes, and was constrained to appeale vnto Cæsar, both by reason of the iniquitie of his enemies, and the vnrightheousnesse of the President: yet before king Agrippa, before the Captaynes, before the chiefe men of Cæsarea, and the whole nobilitie of that countrey, he so handleth Christes cause, that he both proueth his innocencie in the hearing of them al, and leaueth in their minds certaine euident prickes & stings of the worde of God. But it shall be good to consider euery thing in order, as it is declared.

Paules hearers.

The Euangelist beginneth his narration with Paules hearers, among whom are first numbred Agrippa & Bernice his sister, who (sayth he) came into the auditorie with all kinde of princely pompe and ostentation. After them come the captaynes of the souldiours, & other lords of the court, and as many as were of authoritie in the citie, whō Festus thoght good to haue there present, to this ende, that howsoeuer the matter fel out he might the easilier auoyde the enuy of the Jewes. Aboue al things we haue to consider Agrippa, who as we sayd before, was desirous to heare Paul. For this desire proceeded more of a certayne bayne curiositie of minde, than of any loue vnto the truthe or saluation. In so muche that he resembleth Herodes Antipas, brother to his graundfather, which also was desirous to see Chryst, but for none other cause, saue for that he heard his miracles praised of so many, a profe wherof he giueth vs, in that he cometh to Paules sermon, not like a disciple or lerner, nor laierth aside none of his princely pompe,

but

but bringeth all his courtlinesse with him for a shew into a preaching place. By this example we learne what affection this world beareth to the word of God. Surely either it hateth it, or at least contemneth it, even of nature, as which would not haue his workes reprobued by the light thereof, and bleth to preferre earthly things before heavenly. Yet in the meane season it cometh to passe many times that some come to heare it, though not led with the desire of saluation, yet with the affections of the flesh, that is to say, with curiositie, or with hope of some gaine, or of hatred to Popische doctrine, or because they would not be thought to be vngodly or enemies vnto religion. But because suche come, not as learners, but as iudges and comptrollers, and bring with them, the opinions they haue conceiued before, it cannot be, that the gospel doth any thing profite them, the ende whereof Paule saith, is to captiuate all the wisdom of the flesh, and to bring it in obedience to the faith. Therefore we must bring with vs, humble and lowly mindes, and desirous to learne, if wee will receiue any profite thereby. See Luke. 8. Againe, we are taught by this Example, what to iudge of them, which come to Sermons and Churches in pompous attire and araye. These are like vnto Agrippa and Bernice, and giue no litle offence. For first, it is a great token of lightnesse in them, that they remember not howe they are but mire and clay, and that the beginning of apparell proceeded first of sinne, so that it were more meete for vs to humble our selues in them, than to shew any pride therein. Another occasion of offence there is, in that we be the authors, that other folishly imitate vs, or else conceiue wanton imaginations, or else minister occasion to the poorer sort to be impatient, and to murmur against God. Therefore we incurre that horrible sentence of God, which pronounceth that terrible woe against suche, as giue other occasion of offence. Furthermore it is a token of a certaine beastly dulnesse, and of a minde too too vntowarde, to shew pride in the sight of God, where we ought to shew moste lowlinesse. For who would not say, he were out of his wittes, which should come before a Prince, to aske pardon of his trespassse in proud apparell, and with surdie and lofty countenance? And yet we come vnto the Church, to aske forgiveness of our sinnes, and to heare the woorde of saluation, in all insolent and proude manner. Verily Christ forbiddeth vs to be carefull for needfull apparell. With what face therefore, can we make garments of suche sundry sortes & deuises to set out our pride? See what Esay saith in his third Chapter at large, touching this offence.

But let vs consider Paule, which at Festus commaundement is brought forth the bounde in chaines, as appeareth by his owne saying: yet not as a guiltie person before iudges, but as a teacher and preacher. Heere in this sight or shew, appeareth the wonderfull counsel of God, where an assembly of most honorable personages, glittering in golde, purple and scarlate, abide the comming of Paule, looking like a prisoner, pale and wanne, and dragging his chaine after him in his hande. Yea God offereth vnto him, being thus in bandes, a singular occasion to behaue himselfe boldly in the quarell of his name. Whereby it appeareth, howe the wicked can nothing preuaile with their enterprises and deuises. For what other thing went the Iewes about hitherto, but to take from Paule all occasion of preaching, and so to extinguishe all his doctrine? But they so litle preuaile heereby,

Paule is
broughte
forth in
chaines to
preache.

that rather by their meane, he is brought before a great and honorable assembly, before whome otherwise, he shuld neuer haue had opportunitie to haue preached. Let these things serue to comfort vs, among the terroris of this world. For why should we henceforth feare the world, seeing God is of as great power in these dayes, to defend his people, and to promote his word. Chiefely we haue in this place to consider Paul, which as the sequele declareth, was bolde and couragious of minde: for he was not dismayde at the sight of the king & the nobilitie. But he declareth his matter so stoutly, that though he were in bands, yet he put his auditors in no litle feare, and greatly moued the king in his minde. The like thing we saw hapned before in Felix. These things teach vs, that Gods word can not be bound, although his ministers be in prison, and in bandes. For the auctoritie or effect therof, dependeth not vpon man. For the spirit of god bloweth wher it wil, and is not subiect to the vaine pleasure of man. We are taught also, what we haue to do in like case. Let vs boldly defend Chyristes cause, & not passe a strawe for the auctoritie and tyranny of this world. For the cause we haue in hand is iust and good, and vpon it dependeth all our saluation. And it is not our cause, but Gods, who can easily defend the same. And it is not we that handle it, but the spirit of God which worketh and speaketh in vs, according to the promise of Chyrist. Who therefore wil withstand the spirit of God? Who will thinke to preuaile against it? Or who being comforted and holpen thereby, wil let him selfe be overcome of cowardly feare?

Festus causeth Paule to be diligently heard.

Last of all, Festus setteth Paule before Agrippa, & the residue of his hearers, and repeateth in few words his cause, and the end of this present accusation. For this (saith he) is he whom all the Iewes required to haue put to death: which yet in his iudgement had committed nothing worthy of death. Howbeit, bicause he had appealed vnto Caesar, he desired that they wold diligently heare him, & weigh euery thing, that he might haue some mater of certaintie, to wryte to Caesar of him. After this sort the Romane President causeth Paule to be diligently heard, which thing was not don without the prouidence of god. In the meane season we haue a new testimony of Pauls innocency, which it behoued many times thus to be defended, bicause God foresaw, that in all ages his doctrine shuld haue greuous enemies. Here appeareth also the incurable malice of the Iewes, which ceased not to require an innocēt to be put to death. For thus they folow their forefathers at the hard heeles, who as we read, with like impudēcy required the death of Chyrist the sonne of god Pilate being much against it. Therefore they are vtterly ouerthrowne by the iust iudgement of God, & made a common exāple vnto al men, as Chyrist many times prophesied, shuld hapen vnto them. Moreouer, we haue to consider Festus saying, which thinketh it a point of absurditie to send a prisoner, and not to declare wherof he is accused, & wherfore he was put in prison. These things teache vs, that we must so deale with prisoners, that we may haue ful & perfite certificate of all things. For we must not deale rashly in matters of life & death. Seeing that an hethen man vnderstode thus much, what shall it become those magistrates to do, which professe the name and word of Chyrist? And with what moderation of minde, becommeth it vs to entreat al captiues, seeing we know that whatsoeuer benefite or harm we do them, the same we do vnto Chyrist himself. But wold to God our aduersaries in these daies wold

ble

bſe this equitie towards the ſeruautes of Chriſt, who thinke it but a ſpoyle to bſe all kinde of vncurtelie towards vs without any cauſe. Howbeit let theſe things nothing offend vs, ſeing we know that Chriſt alſo, was moſt vncurteouſly delt with. For why, ſhould the diſciples or ſchollers, thinke to bee in better caſe than their maiſter? Let vs rather reioyce to ſuffer all kinde of afflictions for the truth ſake, for this is the high way vnto heauen, where the inheritance of eternall life remaines for vs with our head Jeſus Chriſt: to whom be bleſſing, honoꝝ, power, & gloꝝy for euet. Amen.

The. xxvj. Chapter vpon the *Actes of the Apoſtles.*

The. Clix. Homelie.

A Grippa ſaid vnto Paule, thou art permitted to ſpeake for thy ſelfe. Then Paule ſtretched forth the hand, and answered for him ſelfe: I thinke my ſelfe happy king Agrippa, bicauſe I ſhall anſwere this day before thee of all the things whereof I am accuſed of the Iewes, namely bicauſe thou art expert in all cuſtomes and queſtions which are among the Iewes. Wherefore I beſeeche thee to heare me paciently. My liuing that I liued of a childe (which was at the firſt among mine owne nation at Ieruſalem) knowe all the Iewes, which knew me from the beginning, if they would teſtifie: for after the moſt ſtraighteſt ſecte of our religion, I liued a Phariſey.



Ur Lord and Sanioure Jeſus Chriſte talking wyth Ananias touchyng Paule, and his miniſterie, ſaith among other things: This is a choſen veſſell vnto me, to carrie my name before nations and kings, and the children of Iſraell. Which words as they greatly commend the miniſterie of Paule: ſo oughte they to ſtirre vs hyppre diligently to conſider all thoſe things that he either did or ſuffered in his miniſterie: bicauſe it is euident that nothing therein chaunced vnto him, without

the ſingular prouidence of God. This is cheefely to be conſidered in this preſent action, where, before king Agrippa, the Nobles of the Courte, and cheefe rulers of the Countrey, he defendeth his ſaith and doctrine with ſuch dexteritie and conſtancie, that he moued his auditoꝝ greatly, and by his example taught vs of what force and efficacie both the worde of God and faith is. Which thing ſhall the moꝝe euidently appeare, if we conſider eche thing in order.

Paule hath
licence to
speake for
himselfe.

First Agrippa is sette forth which speaketh vnto Paule, and giueth him leaue to answer for him selfe. This was without doubt, done throughe the aduise of God, which by this meane would haue the gospell preached vnto those men. For (where as Paule saith otherwheres) God will haue all men to be saued, he will also haue the worde of saluation to be reuealed and preached vnto all men. And this his ordinaunce is so firme and stable, that it can neuer be stopped with any enterprise of the tyras of this world. Whereof wee haue bothe testimonies and Examples euery where in the scriptures by the which we may confirm our wauering faith in al aduersities. But bicause we haue spoken heereof oftentimes, let vs now obserue the example of equitie and iustice, that the holy Ghost setteth forth in Agrippa, though otherwise an arrogante and naughtie man. For he heard how all the lewes required to haue Paule put to death, and he saw nothing in him, wherby to get any commoditie or honoure: yet is he nothing moued with the iudgement of the whole nation, nor thinketh it not meete to haue more consideration of himselfe, than of publike iustice, but appoynteth to heare Paule himselfe, and first offereth him occasion and leaue to speake. Let all men that beare office, folowe this example, and the more they see to conspire against any man, the more diligently let them weighe and examine the matter, least by their bearing and slouthfulnesse, they set forward other mennes maliciousnesse. This is a thing now a dayes too common (the more is the pitie) that Kings and Princes eares are not open to the faithfull of Christ, bicause they thinke it meeter to hearken vnto Bishops and to their adherentes, and so being corrupt with preiudice, they thinke they can not be altogether faultlesse, whome the spiritualtie so zelously and earnestly withstande.

Paul declar-
eth his
cause with-
out feare.

The argu-
ment of
Pauls ora-
tion.

But returne we vnto Paule, who althoughe hee be compelled vpon the sodaine, to pleate his cause in bandes before so honorable an audience, yet he putteth out his hand for silence, and so beginneth his sermon, which as it containeth in it, all things belonging to the mater, so it sheweth no manner token of any dismaide or troubled minde. Where we may see bothe the truthe and also the effect of Christs promises. For Paule had bothe the promises general, and also a peculiar, wherof we made mention in the beginning: namely that he should preache the name of Christ before Kings and Princes. Wherefore hauing an eie therunto, he setteth all dangers at naught, bicause he knewe that Christs power was greater, than that it could be overcome or hindered by any attemptes of the world. How be it, it behoueth vs also to take comfort of this example, bicause Christ hath promised his spirite vnto all the godly, to gouerne their hearts and mouthes, when they shall be compelled, to giue an accompt of their faith. Furthermore, touching Pauls oration, it consisteth wholly of a narration full of arguments, a trimly framed for defence of himselfe: for he declareth what trade of life he led of a child, and how he neuer gaue any suspicion of lightnesse or impietie. Againe, howe after he was called to the faith of Christ, and to be an Apostle, he neither taughte nor did any thing contrary to the scriptures. Wherby he proueth that the lewes hated him so deadly without his desert.

Before his narration, hee bleth a shorte and pretie kinde of beginning, wherby he goeth about to get the Kings fauor and good will, saying he is

happie,

happie, in that he must plead his cause before him, who was not ignorant in the Ceremonies and Questions of the Iewes. For Paule knewe that it was in haire, to dispute of graue and waightie matters before them that were altogether ignorant and unskilfull. Wherefore, as it is mete to haue iudges ledde with desire of iustice: so wisdomē ioyned with vnderstanding, is moste necessary for them. And it is meete that they shoulde not only be skilful in politike matters, but also learned in matters pertaining to faith and religion: the care and study wherof, the scripture euery whet commendeth vnto magistrates. For where they be ordained of God, who hath giuen them such power and auctoritie, they are taught by the very law of nature, to be carefull againe for the maintenance of Gods honoure and glory. Wherefore, God appointed the booke of his law, for kings continually to read in, and the same booke stirreth bp all Magistrates thereto, with the Examples of moste godly kings, whome Agrippa here wisely solowed, and vnderstode religion thoroughly. But now a dayes we are growne to suche doltishnesse, that kings thinke they are most worthy to be praised for their religion, when they vnderstand least thereof, and say it belongeth nothing vnto them. This we may thanke the tiranny of the Bishops of, which perceyued that their greatest power consisted in the ignorance of Princes.

Moreover, he beginneth his narration, whose argument we haue now declared of his childehoode or life before ledde, calling the Iewes to witnesse, howe godlyly and holily he had spent the same. For where in other places, he wyrteth that a Bishoppe shoulde bee commended euen of very straungers also, he therfore goeth about to proue his innocencie by the testimonie of his enimies. And bicause it should not be thought he had led his life in any corner, he saith he was broughte bp at Ierusalem, where the seate of Religion was, and the moste famous vniuersitie in all Iewrie. There he saide from his beginning he had led a life moste commendable, euen after the secte of the Phariseys. For this secte was worthy to be preferred before all other, bicause the Phariseis had the scriptures in most reuerence, and excelled the other sectes in honestie of life. The greatest erreure they had, was, that they maintained the righteousnesse and merite of their owne woorkes. Nowbeit Pauls scope and ende is, to persuaade Agrippa, that he had done nothing rashly, of any wicked, lighte or waueering minde, seeing he had bled from his childehoode, the moste straightest kinde of religion.

It is not without a cause, that he declareth he led his childehoode so godlyly. For thereby he teacheth howe muche it auaileth to haue publike persons well brought bp in their childehoode. For althoughe they ought not to be reiected, which conuert in their olde age, yet are they muche more to be preferred, whose life afore time hath not beene spotted or stained. For suche will goe more boldly on in their wonted vertues, and are more able by their auctoritie to withstande the enterprises of the wicked: whereas the other sorte retorne againe to their frequented vices, and being in danger of the vbraidings and reproches of the wicked, by little and little, lose all their auctoritie. Beside that their counsell, althoughe it be honest and godly, yet commonly with the good it is suspected, who feare that they are led either with lightnesse of minde, or else with some other leude

Pauls childehoode and education.

Of what importance the goodly bringing bp of children is.

affection. Therefore, they that minde to place their chidzen eyther in office of the Churche, or of the common weale, must haue a diligent regarde of their education and bringing bp. And heere are two poyntes very necessary, that Paule telleth of him selfe. The one is, that youthe must be brought bp in suche places where religion cheefely flourisheth, that with learning and experience, they may ioyne also the taste and sauoure of religion. The other is, that euen by and by at the beginning, they must chuse suche a kinde of life, as hath the least occasion of vices in it. For where youthe euen of nature is prone vnto sinne, occasions of euill must be shunned and auoided, rather than sought for. Woulde to God the men in oure dayes, which cause their chidzen many times to be brought bp among suche as they knowe, are farthest from the true knowledge of Christ, wold obserue these things: who are led with no care of religion, but of gaine altogether. Therefore oute of suche schooles cometh that kinde of men which measureth religion according to friendship and commoditie, and who bursting ouer the barres of all godlinesse, fall headlong into all kinde of mischeefe, and are not onely the destruction of themselves, but also of the Churche and common weale. This thing, Examples both olde and new do teach vs, whereby we ought to be prouoked, so to cause our chidzen which wee meane to set to Goddes seruice, to be instructed and brought bp from their youth, that they may be profitable bothe to them selfe, to the Churche, and to the common weale, and at lengthe receiue the inheritance of the kingdom of heauen, with Iesus Christ our Lord: to whome be praise, honoz, power, and glozy for euer. Amen.

The. Clxj. Homelie.

And nowe I stande and am iudged for the hope of the promise made of God vnto our fathers: vnto which promise our twelue Tribes (instantly seruing God day and night) hope to come. For which hopes sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Iewes. Why shuld it be thought a thing incredible vnto you, that God should raise againe the dead?



PAULE the Apostle in giuing an accoumpt of his faith and doctrine, labourerth cheefely to proue that he did nothing of rache minde, or of vngodly intent and purpose. To the which ende also he made mention of his childehoode, prouing that he was so brought bp, and had so ordered his life, that he ought not iustly to be suspected either of any temeritie or vngodlinesse aboute religion. By which Example wee are taught among other things, that wee must so trade and traine bp oure selues in Religion, that we may be able to render a reason to euery man after what sorte wee haue liued therein euen from oure childehoode. For as God is the tutoure and defendoure of all age, so it behoueth that all manner of age should be consecrated vnto him.

And

And we reade that he requirerh oftentimes, to haue children brought bp from their infancie in his lawe and seruice. Which place reprocureth the shamefull erroz of them, which say that religion is a more waightie & intricate mater, than for lay men to meddle with: wheras notwithstanding God willet that euen tender age should exercise it selfe therein, & wheras nothing pertaineth so indifferently to all men as religion: for the which the scripture teacheth that mē were created euen from the beginning. But bicause we haue entreated hereof in other places, lette vs now goe on in Pauls oration.

He somewhat breaking of his narration begun a little before, declareth the state of the whole controuersie betweene him and his aduersaries the Iewes. For he saith he is accused for the hope of the promise, which God sometimes made vnto the fathers, and vnto the which the twelue tribes, that is to say, the whole nation of the Iewes, hope by their continuall seruing of God at length to come. And being not content once thus to haue said, he repeteth the same he said again, saying: for this hope sake, O king Agrippa am I accused, which words seme to haue in them some shewe of indignation, wherby he would expresse the indignitie and heynousnesse of the matter. As if he should say: who perceiueth not what great birigh- teousnesse is in mine aduersaries, seeing they charge me of death, & accuse me of schisme, wheras my doctrine and faith dependeth vpon that ancient promise of God, wherein all the fathers in times past, put their trust: and wherof as many of the Israelites as worshipping the true God, desire to be partakers, hauing none other end of all their holinesse and religion. Nowbeit that hope of promise whereof he speaketh, is Iesus Christe the sonne of God, in whome only God hath promised life and saluation, from the very beginning of the world vnto the fathers saue into destruction through the sinne of Adam, as shortly after shall be declared more at large. He plainly nicketh bothe their ignorance in religion, and also the preposterous affaice which they had glorying in the couenant and promises of God, and wold be taken all together for his people, and yet did cast aside Christ, throughe whose merite and intercession, those promises are ratified: whereof woe should haue no vtilitie at all, vnlesse he were the maintainer and defender of the couenaut. But bicause as well the diuine power of Christ, as also the office whereunto his father appoynted him, appeareth most evidently in the resurrection of the deade (as Paule other wheres declareth) he omit- teth now the other Articles, and taketh him to entreate only thereof as a thing chiefly appertaining to this present controuersie. For by this it appeared, both that Iesus Christ which rose againe from the deade, was the author of life and saluation, and also the erroz of the Saduces which utterly denied the resurrection, was confuted. For it is very like that this secte at that time did muche preuaile with many men: and that diuers of Pauls hearers were infected with the same. For onlesse we graunte this, Paule may seme too importunate, which asketh in angrey wise, why it should seme incredible to them, that he saide God should raise the deade a- gain. And vndoubtedly Paule intreated of all these things more at large, and confirmed them with testimonies of scriptures.

But Luke doth but touch certaine breefe notes of euery thing, to giue vs an occasion the more to meditate thereof. And surely this place which

The state
of the whole
controuersie.

The sume
order of
this prelet
place.

the breuitie thereof maketh obscure, will be moſte plaine, if a man woulde draw out thereof the propoſitions or arguments, which Paule as it is euident more at large handled. Wherof this ſhal be the firſt: Our controuerſie is touching the hope of the promiſſe made by God vnto the fathers; and of the whole meane of our ſaluation. The ſeconde I teache. that this hope conſiſteth in Jeſus Chriſte onely which they conſtantly demie. The third, I proue by the reſurrectiō of him which declared that he was both the ſonne of God, and the aucthor of life, that all the meane of our life and ſaluation conſiſteth in Chriſte. The fourth, neither ought the reſurrection of Chriſt to ſeeme incredible to any man, for as much as it is a moſte eaſie thing vnto God in the end of the world, to raiſe all the dead againe, as all the ſcriptures declare he ſhall doe. This ſeemeth to me to be the order of Pauls oration, and the ſumme of al thoſe things, which hitherto haue ben ſpoken, which if we conſider, it ſhall be very eaſie to explicate euery thing more at large. Alſo by the enumeration of certaine principall poyntes, he thought he wold make his hearers attent, bicauſe they ſhould not thinke that he contended with the Iewes about a triſle, as Feſtus before had ſaid. In the meane ſeaſon we haue to conſider certaine common places falling out in this matter.

The faith
of the Fa-
thers, is a
moſt an-
cient thing.

1. Cor. 5.
Colloſ. 2.

Adam.

And firſt of all, we be taught what the faith & hope of all the Saintes, and of the whole church of God, hath bene in al ages. Verily euen ſuch as hath depended vpon Chriſt the ſonne of God: which became man for our ſake, and which beleueth that all faith and ſaluation conſiſteth in him only. For this dothe Paule in this place call the hope of the promiſſe made ſometime vnto the fathers. But the Catholike faith ſaith, that all the promiſſes are confirmed in Chriſt, as Paule himſelfe euery where confeſſeth, ſpecially in the firſt Chapter of the ſecond to the Corinthians, and in the tenth Chapter of the firſt to the ſame Corinthians, where he wyrteth that the condition of the fathers of the olde Teſtament was all one with oures, ſo that he attributeth to them our ſacraments alſo, which are baptiſme and the ſupper, eue as other wheres he attributeth to vs the paſſeouer and ſpirituall circumciſion. Howbeit theſe things ſhall more euidently appeare, if we conſider the promiſſes of God, which he made ſometimes vnto the fathers. Among theſe fathers, Adam is the firſt, who when hee was thruſt out of Paradife into this vale of miſery, had none other hope of ſaluation giuen him, than that which is in Chriſt only. For the ſeede of the woman was promiſed vnto him, whole heele the ſerpent ſhould lie in wait to ſting, although in baine, for as much as that ſeede ſhuld cruſh and tread down the ſerpents head. But Chriſt alone may be called the ſeede of the woman, which without any commiſtion of mannes ſeede, toke fleſhe of the virgin Marie. The Deuill that olde Serpent lay craftely in waite againſt his heele, that is to ſay againſt his humane nature, and by his instruments brought to paſſe that he was ſlaine vpon the Crolle, but to his owne vtter hinderance and deſtruction. For hereby it came to paſſe, that Chriſt when he died, trade downe the head of the Deuill, that is, vanquiſhed his rule and tirannie, by the merite of his deathe, and utterly diſarmed him of his force, and draue him out of his kingdome.

But ſeeing there is no doute, but that Adam beleued this promiſſe, for as muche as he chaunged his wiues name, and called hir Heua, as which

ſhould

Should bring forth them that should lyue: it is euident that he dyd put his whole hope and trust in Iesus Chryst alone, which was that promised seed of the woman. Therefore Adam was a christian man, and beleued that he and his posteritie should be deliuered and saued from the tyrannie of the Diuell, through the merite of Chryst onely. Paule in the. 11. chapter to the Hebrues proueth most euidently, that Abel, Enoch, Noe, and the other fathers, as many as before the flood pleased god, were of the same fayth. After the flood we haue chiefly to consider Abraham, with whom it pleased God to renew his covenant, whom the scriptures call the father of all those that beleue. Moyses and Paule beare witnesse that he beleued God, and howe that beleefe and fayth was imputed vnto him for righteousness. What he beleued all men knowe: verily that the promise of God, which sayde, that in his seed all nations should be blessed and saued, should be confirmed. And that this seed was Chryst, bothe Paule in the third to the Galathians, and Chryst him selfe witnesseth. For Chryst sayth: Abraham reioyced to see my day, and he sawe it, and was glad. This is to be vnderstanded of the contemplation and sight of fayth onely. Wherevpon we gather that Abraham also was stayed by by fayth onely in Chryst, and at length saued. Touching his offspring and issue, Isahac and Iacob, what needeth it to speake, seeing it is manifest that the promises made vnto the father, are so oftentimes repeated vnto them: yea Iacob when he lay a dying, preached to his children touching the sauour that was promised, and playnely expresteth his comming. And if we consider Moyses, it shall appeare that he also had his respect vnto Chryst onely. He sendeth the people of Israell vnto him, whereas he promiseth them a great Prophet, which all men were bound to heare, as we vnderstode before by the words of Stephen and Peter. Moreover, that one Epistle to the Hebrues is sufficient to teach vs, that all the Ceremonies of the lawe, and the Leviticall service were but shadowes of Chryst, and of the things that belonged vnto hym. I omitte the testimonies of the Prophetes for breuitie sake. Let this suffice for them al, where Chryst teacheth vs that the mysteries both of his death and resurrection were long before prophesied by Moyses, the Prophetes, and wyrters of the Psalmes. Therefore Paule very well professeth that he teacheth none other fayth or hope of saluation, than that which the fathers had, which beleued the promises that God had made.

Let vs also obserue howe he complayneth that he is accused for this selfe fayth, and that of the Jewes, which did mooste glory in the fathers and in the promises. This thing teacheth vs what state the truth is in in this world: verily even suche, that not only the open enemies take against hir, but also those that will seeme to be the most earnest followers of hir. This we read came to passe in the time of the Prophetes long ago. And as Chryst teacheth vs, they made much of the Prophetes tombes and graues, which yet hated their doctrine worse than a tode. So when Chryst came vnto them, which every day looked for him, according to the Oracles of the Prophetes, yet they neither knew him nor receiued him. The same we see falleth out also, even in our dayes. For they that bragge of the name of Chryst, and superstitiously worship the mother of Chryst the Virgin, and the Saintes with their reliques for Chrystes sake: the same persecute the true fayth of Chryst and the doctrine of the Apostles: for no

Abel Enoch
Noah.

Abraham.

Gene. 12.

Roma 4.

Iohn 4.

Isahac and
Iacob.

Moses.

Luke 24.

The state
of the true
fayth in
this world.

cause so muche, as for that it chalengeeth to Chryste onely all the glory of our redemption and saluation. And now a dayes euery where among the Christians suche men are accused of vngodlynesse and heresie, as do teach that men ought to trust in Chryste onely, and to seeke all their saluation in him alone. Therefore we haue as great occasion in these dayes to complayne as Paule had, who thought it vnneste to be accused of the Jewes for the promise sake made sometime vnto the fathers. But this is the vntowardnesse of this worlde, whereto we must not be offended, seeing it is both an olde practise, and examples of all ages teach vs, that the true worshippers of God haue alwayes wrestled and striven agaynst the same.

The true
trade of
mainte-
ning the

Let vs obserue moreouer in what order, and after what sorte Paule defendeth bothe his sayth and doctrine. First, he alleageth the promise of word of God, and therevnto he ioyneth the consent of the whole Church. For he nameth the twelue tribes together, thereby playnly declaring, that he hath no regarde what a certayne few of the Priestes thinke, but what the whole company of the saythfull haue beleued in all ages, according to the word of God. This is the best way of mayntayning and defending the sayth. For where mannes traditions are of no authoritie with God, the worde of God muste principally be brought forth, and by it a reason must be rendered of all opinions. This foundation bering layde, then must we also haue an eye vnto the Church, not to the company of a certayne fewe, which challenge to them selues alone the name thereof, but vnto that vniuersall assemble and congregation which wee knowe hath bene from tyme to tyme, continually since the beginning of the worlde: although sometymes it hath bene somewhat selde and obscure, some while somewhat more in number and more euident, euen as it seemed good vnto him, which chose vs in his sonne before the foundations of the worlde were layde. Therefore the errour of our age is enomious and playne absurde, wheremany by and by at the firste choppe, will alleage the consent of the Church, constituting the same vppon a certayne sorte of conspired counterfaytes, that is to say, lined and shauen creatures of Antichrist, to whome they make the worde of God and the interpretation thereof to bee in subiection, and gyue them power to decree and appointe what they will, concerning the sayth. Whome if a man would examine according to the markes of the Primatiue Church, they shall so little be accounted worthy to be heades of the Church, that they ought scarce to be taken for any members thereof.

The resur-
rection of the
dead oughte
not to be
thought in-
credible.

Waste of all we see that the Article of resurrection ought to be taken for certayne and assured, seeing that Paule alleageth the same with a certayne kind of indignation agaynst those that doubted thereof, saying: Why seemeth it vnto you an incredible thing that God should raise vp the dead agayne? As if he should say: Is it not a maruyle that men should doubt of that which is euery where proued by so many argumentes? For to let passe the Scriptures, the reason of Gods iustice requireth, that the dead should ryle agayne, and receiue a recompence for the things which they heere haue done: considering we see the wicked lyue most commonly welthylly in this worlde, and the godly in miserie. Wee haue more ouer examples appearing euery yere in plants, trees, and in euery lyuing creature. Do we not reade also that the first man was made of the earth, and

howe

howe many were rayled agayne to life miraculously, first by the prophets, and then at length by Chryst him selfe: But letting passe these arguments, Paule sendeth his hearers to the consideration of Gods power onely: verily to preuent this mischiefe that measureth the mysteries of fayth according to the capacitie and reach of mans reason. It is also a ridiculous errour, to thinke that impossible to God, whereof we can not perceyue a reason by and by. And this is to be obserued, not onely in the Article of resurrection, but also in all others, to the ende wee shoulde subdue our reason to the obedience of fayth. Yet must we not bring in (as some men vse) new and absurde opinions, vnder the pretence of Gods omnipotencie. For where we are certayne of the will of God according to his worde, there it shal be lawfull for vs to reason of his omnipotencie: which thing thou shalt in bayne doo, if thou doo not first proue that God is willing to do that which thou meanest. Furthermore, let vs holde faste the chiefe poynt of this place, that we trussing in the hope of the ancient promises, worshipping God day and night, which hath opened to vs life and eternall saluation in the promised seede Iesus Chryst our sauour: to whom be praise, honour, power and glory, for euer. Amen.

The.Clxij.Homelie.

I Also verily thoughte in my selfe, that I ought to doo many contrary things, cleane agaynst the name of Iesus of Nazareth, which thing I also dyd in Ierusalem, and many of the Sainctes dyd I shutte vp in prison, and had receiued authoritie of the highe Priestes. And when they were put to death, I gaue the sentence, and I punished them oft in euery Synagoge, and compelled them to blaspheme: and was yet more madde vpon them, and persecuted them euen into straunge Cities. About which things as I went to Damascus, with authoritie and licence of the high Priestes, euen at Mid-day (O King) I sawe in the way a light from heauen about the brightnesse of the sunne, shine rounde about me, and them which iorneyed with me. When we were all fallen to the earth, I hearde a voyce speaking vnto me, and saying in the Hebrue tong: Saule, Saule, why persecutest thou mee? It is harde for thee to kicke agaynst the pricke. And I sayde, who arte thou Lorde? And he sayde, I am Iesus whom thou persecutest.



The Apostle Paule declared yester day the state of the whole controuersie betweene him & the Jewes, teaching vs that the contention was about no trifle, but about the whole meane of our saluatiō: where he also proued that he neither beleueed nor taught any thing, but that which God had promised the fathers in times passed, and wherein the onely hope of the Church of Israel, had in al ages consisted. Where we learne that the fayth of Chryst was the onely and moste aunciente meane, thorough which all the fathers in tymes passed were saued. Furthermore,
bycause

Paul became
a Christian
agaynst his
will.

1. Tim. 1.
1. Cor. 15.

Psal. 7.

psal. 2. 3. 33.

The tiran-
nie of Paule
agaynst the
Churche of
Christ.

The state
of the chur-
che.

bycause Paule in the beginning of his narration sayde he was a Pharisee, he returneth handsonely to his interrupted narration agayne, and declareth the hyssorie of his conversion: the onely scope and ende whereof is, to put away the accusation of leuitie, declaring that he was called by God, yea enforced agaynst his will.

But to the ende his narration might haue the more weight and authority, he declareth first how he was affected towards the Christian fayth, and that in such diligent sorte, that he omitteth none of the things that he enterprised agaynst Christ. For first of all he premiseth the cause, saying: I was sometime of the minde that mine aduersaries be. For I was bitterly perswaded that I ought to do many things agaynst the name of Jesus Christ. Whence sprang this perswasion: verily of a blind and rash zeale of the fleshe, which otherwheres he attributeth to all the Jewes. Yet he maketh not mention herof, to extenuate or excuse his offence thereby, but to teache vs by his example how greatly men fall, onlesse they order their dooings according to the worde of God. For in other places he confesseth that he was a moste hapnous sinner, and not worthy the name of an Apostle. Whereby it appeareth howe muche more greuously they offende, which beeing led with no zeale of God or good intention of the mind (as they call it) but with their naughtie affections persecute Christ and his worde. In the meane season marke howe the enterprises of the enemies of the Church are but a meare opinion, and bayne conceypt of a blinded minde, which, notwithstanding they seeme at first well to succede, yet they neuer haue that ende they looke for. For as the Psalmist sayth: they trauaile with mischief, and are conceiued with sorrowe, and haue brought forth vanitie and vngodlynesse. This thing Paule confesseth after a sorte of him selfe, teaching the hearers by his example what they may looke for, if they beginne to take agaynst Christ, or holde on as they haue begonne. For which way can they preuaile, whose deuils and enterprises God scattereth abroad, and laugheth at them out of heauen?

But least any man might thinke that Paule spake more boistfully than truly, he rehearseth also his owne dooings, in molesting and afflicting the Church. I put many of the Sainctes in prison (sayth he) beeing authorized by the Priestes, which authoritie they woulde neuer haue given me, onlesse they had seene me earnestly bent to aduaunce and set forwarde their proceedings. He calleth the Christians Sainctes, bycause they were sanctified through the bloud and merite of Christ. 1. Corinth. 5. Also when they were kyled I pronounced sentence of death vpon them, and gat the consent of others therunto. Beside this, I compelled them when they had bene whipped in the Synagoges, and tormented all maner of wayes, to blaspheme (that is to say) to deny Christ, and to recante those things which they had before spoken both well and godly. Whereby it may be gathered, that the Church of Christ was neuer so well established, but it had some chaffe also, which wimowed with the flame of persecution, fell away. Finally, bycause I would spare no kinde of madnesse, I began to roue abroad into forren Cities also, bycause I would leaue no place for the Christians to be safe in. Herein we haue an euident Image both of the persecutours of Christ, and also of the state and condition wherein the godly and faythfull be in this world. For commonly these men are entred

and

and hated of the potentates of this worlde: and chiefly of those which excell in name of Religion, and supremacie of the Church, studying under this colour and pretence to seeke their private glory and gayne only. Then afterwarde these men haue fitte ministers for their mischeuous proceedings, who to gratifie their maisters, let no occasion escape or slippe, whereby they may batter and assaulte the Church: and there to they spare for no labour. Heereof therefore proceede imprisonment, condemnations, all kindes of torments, banishments, slaughters, blasphemies, and infinite such other things as these cruell kernes vse to deuise agaynst the godly. Whom in the meane season it behoueth to marke better what they do, why they persecute the godly for the faythes sake. Verily they compell the weaklings to blaspheme, whiles they deny their faith contrary to their conscience, and confesse they haue erred through unhappy & vngodly feare. For this thing Christ numbeth among the sinnes and blasphemie agaynst the holy Ghost. Luke. 12. And Paule expressly calleth the denying of the true faith blasphemie, wherunto he draue and enforced the faithful. Therefore what other thing remayneth for those persecutors, but that horrible woe which Christ threatneth vnto them that giue occasion of offence? For what more greuous and dangerous offence can any man giue, than that whereby men are compelled to sinne agaynst the holy Ghost? They shal therefore feele the heauy hande of God, who nowadayes thinke this but a trilling matter. Whereouer as in Paules former enterprises there appeareth a portraiture of a raging tyrant: so in the confession of the same may bee seene a very Christian mynde, wholly enflamed with the desire of Gods glory. For to what other ende dothe Paule rehearse these hys attemptes, but for that he knewe they made to the setting forth of the glory of God? For heereby both the authoritie of his ministry was defended, and the great mercy of God commended, wherewith he embraced the greatest offendours that are: yea even his enemies also in Christ Iesus. Reade. 1. Timo. 1. And this is the chiefe cause why the godly vse so often to confesse their sinnes, as we see in Dauid and in diuerse others. Therefore the ambition of those men is very dishonest, who for the sauegarde of their owne glory, will eyther neuer confesse their sinnes and greuous errours, or at least wisse wonderfully extenuate and diminish the same.

Furthermore, he setteth the story of his conuersion, agaynst his attempts agaynst Christ, that by comparing of them together it might appeare he became a Christian man, not of any lightnesse or inconstancie of mind, but even being compelled through the power of God. And hereunto chiefly is to be referred the diligent declaration of all the circumstances. For he alleageth both the place and the tyme, and Chrystes talke, and his companions for witnesse, because no man shoulde thinke that he had bene beguyled with any bayne apparition or distraction of minde. But because we haue spoken otherwheres of conuertyng vnto God, and of the dutie of those that conuerte, it shall not now neede to repeat the same againe. Let vs now marke the ende of all these things, which was none other but the defending of his vocation. Yet is it not in vayne that he so diligently reporteth the wordes of Christ, sharply reprehending his merit. For heereby he teacheth the hearers, that if they withstande

Persecutors cause men to blaspheme.

The story of Paules conuersion.

And thus hee sheweth that he was not conuertyed by any apparition or distraction of minde, but by the power of God.

the doctrine of the Gospell, they shal not haue to do with any mortal man, but with the sonne of God, which will punishe their bolde enterprise, to their great losse and hinderaunce. These thinges ought to serue for our comforte, that we abiding constantly in the true sayth, may cleane faste vnto God alone, among all the broyles and enterprises of this worlde, who hath promised to all those that worship him, the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen, in his sonne Iesus Chryst: to whom be prayse, honour, power and glory, for euer. Amen.

The. Clxij. Homely.

BVt ryse and stande vp on thy feete. For I haue appeared vnto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witnesse both of those things which thou haste seene, and of those things in the which I will appeare vnto thee, deliuering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, vnto whom I now sende thee, to open their eyes, that they may be turned from darknesse to light, and from the power of Sathan vnto God, that they may receiue forgiuenesse of sinnes, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by sayth that is towarde me.



Because Paule knew that the Iewes accused him principally of two poyntes: namely, for that he had forsaken the Iewes religion, and turned to the sayth in Chryst, and for that he had matched the Gentils with the Iewes, by preaching the Gospell among them: therefore he diligently declareth the Cozy of his conuersion, because that alone was sufficient to put away bothe the crimes. Vnto the first belong those things which haue hitherto ben said, wherein he declareth, that he chaged not his religion vpon any light fantasie, but whyle he was an enimie vnto Chryst, was compelled to yelde vnto Gods calling. The seconde, he will confute in this place, where he rendreth a reason of his whole ministerie, euen in the very wordes of Chryst: which ministerie he sheweth was committed vnto him vpon this condition, that he should preach the Gospell, not only to the Iewes, but also to the Gentiles. But because these things belong aswell to our instruction, as to the defence of Paule, who may learne hereby both the reason of the ministerie ecclesiastical, and also the whole meane of our saluation. Therefore every thing is to be considered in order.

The first thing wee haue to note, is, howe Chryst commaunded Paule nowe friendly to arise, and to stande vp on hys feete, whome erewhyle he had horribly throwen downe as his enimie, and persecutor. But this thing happened not (as wee haue other wheres heard) before his heart was pulled downe, and that he humbly enquired what the will of Chryst was, and acknowledged him to be his Lorde. Which thing yet he would neuer haue done, but that he felt in his minde an effectuous working of the spirit of Chryst. This treule is a notable example of Gods goodnesse,

which

Chryste ray-
seth vp Paul,
who he had
throwen
downe be-
fore.

which euen then evidently declarerh it selfe, when he seemeth to be angry. For he will not alwayes be chiding with vs, but forasmuche as he desireth to haue men saued, he obserueth this scope and ende in his iudgements, that he will haue men rather instructed to saluation, than destroyed. Neither will he draw forth his whippes and scourges, vntill he see he can not preuaile by his wordes. Neither yet doth he beate vs for any other ende, than to haue vs conuerte vnto him, and to truste to be saued: wherof we haue both testimonies and examples euery where in the scriptures, wherewith we may confirme our wauering fayth in all troubles and aduersities.

But although it seeme a great thing for Chrysle to giue his cruell enemy leaue to aryse, yet is this greater, and euen to be wondered at, that he appoynteth him to the office of an Apostle, which is the most honorable and commendable function in the worlde. Yea he sayth, that he appeared to him to this ende, to make him a minister and witnesse of all the thinges which he had bothe seene before, and shoulde see hereafter. Here in two wordes he comprehendeth the whole office, or duetie of Bishops of the Church. Firste he saythe, that Paule shoulde bee a Minister, not a Lorde and King. So are the Apostles euery where called, and suche as muste serue the whole Church publikely, in setting before them the foode of the soule, and in taking care for the affayres of mannes saluation. Reade Matthew the. 20. and. 24. Luke the. 12. Here vnto it seemeth Paule had a respecte, when he confessed he was a debtor vnto all men, to the Jewes and Gentiles, to the learned and vnlearned. Hereby is excluded the great desire of bearing rule, agaynst the which Chrysle oftentimes in the hearing of the Apostles entreated at large, being not ignorant that many after wardes would come, which vnder the pretence of this ministerie, would looke to reigne like tirantes ouer the Church. This done, he sayth he shoulde be a witnesse, by the which name we reade the Apostles were called also in the first chapter. Thus it liked him more playnly to set out the trade of the ministerie, declaring also what thinges he shoulde beare witnesse of: verily euen of those which he had seene, and which after wards he woulde reueale vnto him. For Paule had seene, and not seene onely, but had also proued by experiance that Christ liued and reigned, and was an earnest defendour of his people. Wherby it was easie for him to gather, that he was the redeemer of mankind, and not onely a meere man, but also suche a God as he knewe the Apostles preached that he was. These therefore were the thinges that he shoulde beare witnesse of. By this place it appeareth (as we haue else where admonished. For howe certayne and infallible a thing the doctrine of the Apostles ought to be taken, seeing they which published the same, were no runners about with pedlary wares, but the very sworne witnesses of Iesus Christ, hauing their vocation confirmed with infinite miracles. Therefore let all ministers remember they are witnesses, and therefore must not preach new opinions at their owne pleasure: but such thinges as they finde for certaintie in the holy Scriptures, let them boldly bring forth, that no man be able to accuse them of falshood or forgery.

Howbeit it might haue seemed to Paule a greuous thing to be appoynted to such an office, as he knewe euen by those thinges onely, which a little

Paule is called to the office of an Apostle.

A minister.

Roma. 1.

A witnesse.

God deliuereth his seruants being in danger.

before he went about, was subject to infinite dangers. Therefore the Lord mixeth therewith a consolation very commodious, and in season, wherein he promiseth to deliver him out of the hands of the Jewes and Gentiles. Thus by the way, as though he had bene dooing of an other thing, he declareth that he was sent also vnto the Gentiles, to bring them lykewise into the societie and felowship of the Church. In the meane season this place teacheth vs, that the Ministers must looke for hatred, persecutions, and all kindes of aduersitie in this world. For except this were their state and condition, it should not neede so often to confirme them, neither with the consolations nor promises of Christ. These promises must diligently be considered, for by them we are taught howe Christ neuer forsaketh his people in their tribulations. And yet muste they not so be vnderstanded, as though he would deliver them from all kindes of aduersitie, and set them in safetie, or so preserve them, that they shall not perishe in body. For we reade that Paule at the last was beheaded by Nero, and the other Apostles also were cruelly put to death. But it is sayde that the Lord delivereth vs, when in this present worlde he assisteth vs with his spirite, giuing vs constancie of mynde, commoditie of dooing, and finally a mouthe and wisdom, agaynst the which our enemies are not able to resist with any probabilitie of reason. Agayne, when he chozeth vs vpp with consolations in the middle of our afflictions, and translateth vs out of the prison of this body into the possession of his kingdome, and preserveth our memorie and good name to remayne to posteritie. After this sorte we knowe he deliuered the holy Martyres, whose remembrance flourisheth at this day, even among the enemies of the fayth. Which promises, seeing they are both generall and alwayes true, there is no cause why we should suffer our selues to be feared, or overcome with any attemptes of this worlde. For who shall separate vs from the loue of God, &c. Reade the place. Rom. 8.

The ende &
vse of the
Gospell.

To conclude, he addeth the ende of all these thinges, which is, that through the ministerie of Paule the eyes of the blinde should bee opened, that they being illuminated, might conuert from darknesse vnto light, and being deliuered from the power of Satan, might be reconciled vnto God, in whom they may receiue remission of their sinnes, and inheritance of the kingdome of heauen through fayth, with all those whom God hath chosen vnto him selfe. These things conteyne in them the duetie of Ministers of the worde, and the true vse of the Gospell. For this cause, that thing is attributed vnto the Ministers, which is properly the worke of God only, as is declared at large. Therefore through the Gospell mens eyes are opened, that they may see God, and the way of saluation. By the Gospell men are conuerted from darknesse vnto light, so that hencefoorth they which were occupied in the works of darknesse, might do the dedes of the light. For the christian Philosophie consisteth not in bayne speculations, but in practise, which extendeth it selfe through all partes of a mans lyfe. Agayne, by the gospel men are brought out of the power of Satan vnto God, to obey him & to serue him. Finally the gospel offereth vnto vs forgiveness of sinnes, & the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen. And we may not thinke that these things stand in bayne sound of words, but forasmuch as christ, which is the only author of these things, is preched through the Gospell,

1. Corin. 3.

they

they are truly attributed to the preaching of the gospel, because the same gospel is not in vaine, but effectuous. Therefore the preaching of the gospel containeth in it the cheefest and only treasure of our saluation. And the ministers therof ought to haue this only end before their eyes, to bring men to be partakers of these things, and not to leade them about as it were in a vaine maze, and stagelike pompe of preaching. Furthermore, we haue heerein comprehended the whole order and manner of our saluation. For where these things are giuen vnto vs of God, it is euident that we want them of nature. Therefore of nature, we be blinde to perceiue any godlynesse, and by our naturall corruption we deserue to waile and mourne vnder the tirannie of Sathan. But by the goodnesse of God it cometh to passe, that we be illuminated by Christ, and be translated from the power of death and darknesse into his kingdome. For we being sanctified and iustified by his merite, enter into the kingdome of eternall life. And all these things (as we said ere while) God offereth vnto vs to be receiued by faith, through the gospel: by the which faith the scripture teach that we be purified and made righteous, because by it only, power is giuen to vs, to embrace Christ, and to receiue this goodnesse. These things might be declared more at large with their dueties, whome Christ hath taken into the kingdome of his father. But because we haue oftentimes spoken therof, it shall be sufficient, to shewe as it were with the finger, the cheefe poyntes of euery thing. In the meane season we haue heere to bewaile the vnrinke and vnhappy blindnesse of the worlde, which continuing so plaine a way of saluation, turne them to the most intricate Laberinth, and pitfalls of eternall damnation. It is our partes to shewe our selues thankfull vnto God, and with constant faith to holde fast the only author of these goodnesse, which is our Lord and sauoure Iesus Christ: to whom be praise, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The order
and manner
of saluation.

The. Clxiiij. Homelie.

WHerfore O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but shewed first vnto them of Damascus and at Ierusalem, and throughout all the costes of Iewrie, & then to the Gentiles, that they shuld repent and turne to God, and do such works as become them that repent. For this cause the Iewes caught me in the Temple, and went about to kill me. Seing therefore that I haue obtained helpe of God, I continue vnto this day, witnessing bothe to small and to great, saying none other things than those which the Prophetes and Moses did say shoulde come: that Christe should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from death, and should shew light vnto the people and to the Gentiles.

PAULE diligently reporteth the Historie of his conuersion before Agrippa, because thereby hee was able manifestly to proue, that he became a Christian man of no light heade, ne yet preached the gospel vnto the Gentiles of any rathe enterprise, but that God was the aucthoure of all the things

AAAAA. iij.

which

Paule obey-
eth Gods co-
trary to the
bidding of
Priestes.

The maner
of true obe-
dience.

Saule, 1
Sain. 13. & 15

f.
The points
and order of
Euangelike
doctrine.
Math 10
Luke 24
y.

which he had hitherto done, who conuerted him when he was of a farre other minde, and commaunded him to preach the gospel vnto the Gentiles also. And after these things thus premised, he declareth what he did more ouer, and what happened vnto him, and thereof taketh an occasion to preach to those that were present.

Firste, hee confesseth plainly the obedience which hee shewed vnto the heauenly vision, which thing is diligently to bee noted. For if wee compare the commaundement of God, with the precept that Paule receyued of the Priestes, wee shall perceiue they differed very muche one from another. For the Priestes sent him to Damascus, with publique commission and auctoritie, to bring those faithfull of Christe that were there to bee putte in bandes and prisonne. But God commaunded him not onely to cease of from his doing, but also to preach the Gospel. Heere therefore he saith he obeyed the calling of God, and that speedely and without all delay: and he is not ashamed to confesse the same, before those with whome hee knewe the Priestes were of more auctoritie than hee was. Therefore hee teacheth vs by his Example, that wee must obay God more than man: and that wee muste make no delay, nor putting of, as soone as we be certaine what his will is. This rule who so euer followeth, they dispatch them selfe at once from great anxiety and care, and cannot doe amisse.

Also wee haue to consider the manner of this obedience, which wee may perceiue by the things, which Paule saith hee did. For he did those things which God commaunded him to doe, and euen as hee commaunded him to doe them, preaching the Gospel bothe to the Iewes, and to the Gentiles. Therefore that is a true obedience, when wee accomplishe the commaundement of the Lorde without all exception. There are also which obey the Lorde, but yet but in parte onely, and as farre forth as seemeth for their owne commoditie: whereof the Scripture giueth vs Examples in the first of Saule, and Samuel the thirtieth and fiftieth. But God is of a farre other minde, which forbiddeth vs to turne from his woorde either to the right hande or to the lefte, either to put any thing to it, or to take any thing from it. Therefore Paule did very well to take in hand the businesse appoynted him of God without any further deliberation, & to fulfil that that he was commaunded, according to the rule of Gods iniunction. Furthermoze, while hee declareth what hee did, hee teacheth also what wee ought to preach in the gospel, and in what order to set it forth.

Firste we muste laboure to bring men to repentance, forasmuche as it is manifest that we be all sinners, and subiect to the wrath of God. Here- with we reade that the Baptiste began, and Christe after him, who taught his Apostles to begin with the same. Whereby it appeareth that they are but slender Gospellers in these dayes, that woulde haue this principle or beginning omitted. Moreouer, the manner of true repentance is expres- sed, which is to tourne vnto God. For as wee in turning from God, doe greuously sinne and perishe: so bothe our repentance and saluation consisteth cheefely in this, that we muste tourne to God againe, and so be reconciled vnto him. This muste bee done by the meane of Christe onely, who bothe woorketh true repentance in vs by his spirite, and reconcil- leth vs vnto his Father: hauing cancelled and blotted out the hand wri- ting of sinne and of the lawe which was against vs.

Therefore

Wherefore Peter in another place, saith he was sent of God, to giue Iudaie repentance and forgiveness of sinnes. Where the erreure of those men is confuted, which preach repentance without Christ, and send men to their owne workes and merites. The thirde pointe of Pauls doctrine is, that men should worke worthy frutes of repentance, which it appeareth John also required with great scueritie, and all the scriptures euery where will and commaund the same. For where God wil haue vs to be no hypocrites nor dissemblers, but challengeth vs wholly to himselfe, it is very requisite, that we should proue our selues to be truly conuerted vnto god, both in our workes, and all other conuersation of our life. This shall we doe, if we lay away our former naughtie desires, and lead a newe kinde of life agreeable vnto the lawes of God, touching the which newnesse of life, we reade very muche euery where in the Epistles of Paule. For heereby we be taught, that good workes must not be taken for merites, but are required as duties prescribed, and due vnto God: forasmuche as we are neuer able to performe them, vnlesse we be regenerated of the spirite and merite of Christ, and be first conuerted vnto God. And although we do what so euer things we are bounde to doe, yet be we vnprofitable seruauntes, as Christ himselfe teacheth.

ty.

Luke, 17

Paul is laid
holde on, for
his obeying
of God.

Thus in three pointes, Paule comprehendeth the whole gospel, and sheweth howe he preached it in the same order. Nowe in this that followeth, he declareth what happened vnto him while he walked in this vocation, to the ende he would easily proue to euery man, howe busily the Iewes dealt with him. For this cause truly (saith he) for that I endeuored my selfe to be obedient vnto God, the lawes tooke me, and would haue killed me in the very Temple: and had done it also, but that I was deliuered through the present helpe of God. He mentioneth the Temple and the danger of death he was in, to declare that they were led rather of blinde affection, than moued with any iust cause: seeing that neither the holinesse of the Temple, nor publike lawe and equitie, coulde restraine them from such iust proceeding. This place teacheth vs, that the obedience which the godly owe vnto God, is the chiefe cause of persecutions. For bothe the Prophets and the Apostles were hated of the world for none other causes, but for that they laboured to bring men vnto God, by preaching the word of God. And now a dayes the seruauntes of Christ are in daunger of persecuting, for this cause onely, for that they put their trust onely in God through Christ, worship him only, feare him only, and serue him only, as he commaundeth. But the hainousnesse of this matter is the greater, for that they which laboure privately and publicly to haue all men saved, are so euill requited. In the meane season let this comfort vs, that we heare Paule was aided by God, and deliuered out of the handes of moste wicked cut throtes. For this is a general rule, & we haue promises euery where, which teache vs, that God deliuereth his people out of temptations, and suffereth them not to be tried aboue their strengthes.

Howbeit after Paule had sufficiently proued, that he was guiltlesse, and was cast in prison without desert, then hee turneth him to Agrippa the king, and to the other hearers, and with great boldnesse, beginneth his oration. And because it might seeme a maruell to any man, howe he was so constant in doing his office, seeing he had so oftentimes befoze bene in ad-

uersitie

2. Peter, 2
1. Cor. 10
Psal. 34. &c
Paule preaches
the
gospel vnto
Agrippa.

Paule is a
dettter vnto
all men.

The sum of
the gospell.

ueritie and danger of the Iewes, therefore he first sheweth the reason thereof: which was, that he was delivered through the help of God, and therefore ought not to be slacke in his office. Thus he ascribeth vnto God the benefite of his deliuey, whereof it seemed the captaine was the aucthor, bicause he knewe the captaine was led by the hand and spirite of God. In the meane season Pauls example teacheth vs, that those which haue once or twice proued & felt the helpe of God, ought to be inflamed with greater diligence, and not (as some be) to waxe the more remisse and negligent, as though they had fulfilled all their duetie at once. For beside that we owe vnto God all kinde of duetie, the lawe of thankfulness requireth the more faith and industrie of vs, least we might seeme vnkinde to God our benefactoure. Againe, bicause he would not seeme importune in preaching vnto them, he declareth that he is bounde in duetie so to doe. For hee was detter vnto all men both smal and great. Thus he stirreth by their mindes to thinke, that the gospell appertained vnto them also. This is very diligently to be considered, that we heare the gospell is preached by the commaundement of God, to men of all states & degrees. For hereby we learne that there is no respect of persons with God: yea that he would haue all sortes of men to be saued. Therefore he hath appointed the ministers of the word to be the disposers and stewardest of all his household. Lette this comfort them that are compassed about with troubles, & also teach both ministers and hearers their duetie, that neither the one at their pleasure get and procure them disciples after their owne calling, nor those other thinke they be at libertie, and not bounde to the rule of the gospell. At length he repeateth what he taught: verely none other thing, but that that Moses and the Prophetes had foreshewed in times past. He comprehendeth all his doctrine in three Articles, which it is euident were then moste in controuersie. The first was, that Christ was that sauoure that was promised, should suffer death for vs. For this, of all other things was counted moste absurde, as the wordes read in the twelfth of John, abundantly declare. The seconde was, that the same Christ should rise againe from the dead, and that the first but not in order. (For we reade that diuers other, before Christ, were raised againe) but in worthinesse and in power, as the aucthor of the resurrection and life of all men. The thirde was, that hee should illuminate with his worde and spirite, not only the Iewes, but also the Gentiles. And that Paule declared these things with many places and testimonies of scripture, the onely exclamation of Festus shall afterwarde proue. And surely there are euerie where extant many testimonies bothe of Moses and the Prophetes, wherby to proue all these things. Wherupon we gather againe, that the doctrine of the gospell, is no newe thing, resting or consisting in a few of persons, but of most antiquitie, and allowed with the consent of all ages. Furthermore, howe in the scriptures are contained whatsoever things are needeful to be beleued, seeing that Paul was able to proue all the mysteries of Christian faith by them. Lette vs therefore be contented with them only, and constantly holde fast the faith contained in them, that by the we may attaine to life euertlasting, through Iesus Christ our Lord: to whome be blessing, honour, power and glory for euer. Amen.

The

The. Clxv. Homelie.

AS he thus spake for him selfe, Festus said with a loud voice: Paule thou art beside thy selfe. Much learning doth make thee madde. And Paule saide, I am not madde moste deare Festus, but speake forthe the wordes of truthe and sobernesse. For the King knoweth of these things, before whom also I spake freely. Neither thinke I that any of these things are hidden fro him, for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, beleeuest thou the Prophetes? I wotte well that thou beleeuest. Agrippa saide vnto Paule. Somewhat thou bringest me in minde for to become a christian. And Paule saide, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that heare me to day, were not somewhat only, but altogether suche as I am, except these bands. And when he had thus spoken, the king rose vp, and the deputie, and Bernice, and they that sate with them. And when they were gone aparte, they talked betweene them selues, saying: This man dothe nothing worthy of death, or of bonds. Then saide Agrippa vnto Festus: this man mighte haue bene let lose, if he had not appealed vnto Cæsar.



After Luke hath declared Pauls oration, he sheweth what effect it toke with the hearers. And this is a very worthy place to be considered. For in two examples he describeth two kindes of men which heare the word of God in vaine. The end and vse of all these things is, that both ministers may learne how to deale with such fortes of men, and also all others vnderstand what to beware of, if they will heare the worde of God to their profite and commoditie.

The first kinde is set out in the example of Festus the Deputie, who is a president of vngodly persones, and of those which haue no knowledge nor taste at all, of any godlinesse. Where we haue first to consider Festus, and then Paule. He gaue eare vnto Paule, declaring his visions, and prouing all the mysteries of the christian faith and mans saluation, by the testimonies of the scriptures, whereof he had neuer heard any thing at all, as being a Gentile, which had more vnderstanding by all likelihode in warres, than in religion. Wherefore he supposeth that Paule in reasoning of such profound and difficult matters, was madde, and like vnto those, that in their frantike fittes vse to imagine with themselves, monstrous and wonderfull things, and so vtter them without all reason: and very importunately hee interrupteth Paule in his speaking. Yet in this one thing he is not altogether vnrasonable, that he imputeth the wante of wit, which he supposed to be in Paule, to ouermuche studie of learning, bybraiding him with none other thing, as many vse to do in these dayes. This example teacheth vs, how litle the word of god preuaileth with the which are led only w mans reason. For this is their comon property to couit that a mockery, that passeth the reach of their capacitie & reason. Whereas in the mean season they vnderstand nothing lesse than the things belonging to the spirite of God. Therefore it cannot be chose but they must thinke the gospel of Iesus Christ

Festus is a president of those which heare the worde with a prophane intent.

Paule constantly and modestly defendeth his ministerie.

Which is the best way of teaching.

crucified, to be the greatest foolishnesse in the worlde: because there is nothing so absurde, and boide of reason, as to aske and hope for saluation in him, which was hanged and died on the Crosse among theues and murderers. Therefore that that happened vnto Paule, preaching before Festus, the same we read happened before vnto the Prophets, and after ward vnto the successours of the Apostles also, namely that they were taken for men out of their wittes. Yea Christ himselfe was mocked of Pilate, what time he confessed he came into the world to preache the truth. For Pilate thought him to be of the number of those men which had labored long in vaine to finde out the truth, because all things among men are doubtfull and vncertaine: why therefore are we offended, because the gospel preuaileth so little in these dayes, seeing there is suche a multitude of men euery where which blinded with the reason of the flesh, and distract in their mindes, receiue the word of God into the way which the infernall Iayes, that is to say, the affections & suggestions of satan, by and by peck by. But what doth Paul? Is he so feared with Festus importunate interruption, that he holdes his peace, and so throughe his silence confirmeth the sinister suspicion, that they had of his being out of his wit? No. Yea, rather he boldly defendeth the authoritie both of his ministry and of the gospel: I am not mad saith he (moste deare Festus) but I speake the wordes of truth and sobrietie. Therefore he boldly putteth such slander away, yet modestly & with such reuerence as is due vnto Magistrates, least through impatience and ire, and rendering of railing againe, he should haue declared he had bene out of his wit in deed. Therefore, after a wise sort, he vterly denieth he was mad: and those wordes which seemed vnto Festus to be of a madde man, he declared to be most true and vttered by him after no curious sort, but with as much sobrietie as could be, and this he proueth by most credible witnesses, among whome firste hee produceth the King, who could be ignorant of none of those things, which hit her to had bene said concerning Christ: because they were not done in a corner, or in secret, but in the most famous Citie of all nations, and at the greatest & principallest feast of all other. Again, he calleth all the Prophets also to witnesse, who foretold that these things should so come to passe, as he declared a little before more at large. And because his saying should haue the more waight and authoritie, he boldly and freely defendeth the authoritie of the Prophets. For he turneth him vnto the King, and saith, Beleeuest thou O King Agrippa, the Prophetes? And not waiting till he had an answer, he preuenteth it, adding moreouer: I knowe that thou beleeuest. For he knew well that the maiestie and truth of the scripture Prophetically, was yet such, even among the most corrupt nation of the Iewes, that if any man called it in doubt, all men would take him to be an vngodly person. And it is to be thought that Paul handled this matter the more at large, because Agrippa confessed by and by that he was greatly moued with his words. Now be it here we haue certain things to be diligently considered, because they make not a little for the comon instruction of all men. First, this place teacheth vs, that the best way of teaching is, that that Paul confesseth he had hitherto obserued, where he saith, he spake the wordes of truth & sobrietie. For aboue all things, ministers must haue a regarde of the truth, least they sel leasing, wherof Christ saith the deuill is the father, vnder the pretence

of

of Goddes worde. And in treating of the mysteries of truth, let them vse a godly and holy sobrietie, giuing heede only to suche things, as may edifie men vnto godlinesse: Least while they folowe the curiositie of the flesh, they bothe entangle themselues in vnprofitable and hurtfull questions, and also offende the weake and ruder sorte. Let them therefore remember that we knowe but in parte onely, and our prophesying is vnperfite: but that heereafter there shall come a day, when withoute all impediment we shall beholde all the mysteries of the kingdome of heauen openly in the face of God.

Furthermore, Paules woordes teache vs, that the affaires of our saluation and Christian religion, are certaine, and that nothing of them is difficult, or to be suspected. For as none of the things which happened vnto Christ, was done in corners: so those things which concerned Christ, and the way of saluation in him, were done in times past publicly and openly among the fathers. For the Patriarkes to whome the promises were made at the beginning, were no rascalles or disfaimed. Also the deliuey of the people of Israell out of Egypte, was a thing well known vnto the Gentiles. The publishing of the lawe with so many myracles, was a famous and a renoumed matter, all which things were figures of the mysteries of Christ. As touching the Prophets, no good man did euer suspect any falshood in them. Furthermore, all the Monarchies bothe of the Assyrians, Persians, Grecians and Romanes had to doe with the nation of the Jewes, among whome the affaires of saluation were taught. The voices of the Apostles did freely sound abroad in all the world, in so muche that all men knewe bothe what they did, and preached. This is a great dignitie of our faith, which is to be found in none other religion. This re- proueth the impudencie of those men which now a dayes call our beleefe in doubt and question. Furthermore this place teacheth vs, that the aucthoritie and credite of the holy scripture, is moste certaine, and that wee must suffer no man to call it in controuersie. For seeing it is inspired of God, it is vnlawfull to doubt of it. For this cause Paule putteth it out of controuersie that Agrippa beleued the Prophets. And Christ hauing to doe with the Scribes of the Iewes, attributeth this vnto them, that they firmly beleue, that life euerlasting is contained in the scripture. Iohn. 5. Howe muche more execrable is the impudencie of our dayes, where some men wickedly caull and scoffe at the scriptures, and other some wonder- fully diminish the aucthoritie of them, while they contende they ought to be allowed and confirmed by the iudgement of men.

Furthermore, lette vs see the seconde kinde of hearers of the woordes, of whome wee haue a patterne sette forth in Agrippa the King, and these are suche as being giuen vnto the worlde, lette the seede of the worde be ouergrown with the cares and desires of the same. For hee dare not denie the Scriptures the aucthoritie whereof hee knewe was of God and infallible. He seeth also that those things which Paule saythe, are agreeable wth the Scripture. Hee feeleth also certaine euident motions of the mynde, whereby hee was allured to take parte wth Christ: and hee dissembleth not the same, bicause hee openly confesseth, that hee was somewhat perswaded. What letteth hym therefore, that hee goeth not forwarde, and publicly professeth Christ?

Christian religion is certain, and not to be suspected of obscuritie.

The scripture of it self worthy of credite,

Agrippa is a patterne of those into who the cares of this worlde choke the seede of the worde.

Merely the vnhappy liking that he had of the worlde, the friendshippe and glory wherof seemed to him more excellent, than that he would forsake it and goe vnto them, whome many men hated and enuied, and other some thought to be out of their wittes. But would God we had no more examples heereof, than Agrippa in these dayes, and that wee hearde not euery where suche as giue the gospel a singular commendation, but yet folowe the doctrine of Antichrist still, for feare of losing their heades and hono^r, or else for feare of putting their life in danger. In the meane season there appeareth in these men what a diuine and wonderful force the Gospel is of, which wresteth out of them, euen against their willes, and strue they neuer so much to the contrary, the confession of the truth: yet it nothing profiteth them, bicause they dare to set them selues against the holy Ghoste.

A very christi-
an wishe
of Paule.

But as Paule very wisely and stoutly answereth Festus, so (bicause hee was able to doe no more) he setteth against the wordes of Agrippa, a very christian wishe, and inflamed with great seruencie of charitie. I wold wish (saith he) of God, that not onely thou, but also all those that heare mee this day, were not only in parte, but wholly suche as I am, these bondes excepted. And there is no doubt, but that Paule wished these things, euen from the heart: who otherwheres prayed for the Iewes bothe day and night, and wished to be accursed for their sakes. We are taught by the way, that it is not sufficient for vs to beleue in parte, but that there is required of vs euery day an increasing in faith, that we may at length growe into a perfect man in Christ Iesus. And the opinion of those men is not to be allowed, which suppose one or two Articles to be sufficient vnto saluation. For so all the other should be vnprofitable and superfluous, which thing should derogate muche both from the wisdom of God, and also from his goodness. Moreover Pauls wishe teacheth vs, that Ministers haue no iurisdiction or power vpon the mindes of men, but that the spirite of God only worketh in them effectuously. For why should Paule trouble himselfe in vaine wishes, if he had beene able to haue tourned Agrippa his minde. But see what is saide to this purpose, bothe by Christe and by Paule. And we muste not let this passe, howe Paule excepteth his bondes. For althoughe they were nothing greivous vnto him, and that he knewe wel the cheefe glory of his Ministerie consisted in them, yet he wished the quietnesse and peace of other men, as farre forth as it stode with the commoditie of their faith and saluation. For thus it becommeth all men to carie their owne crosse patiently, & yet in the meane season to prouide for all other mennes commoditie and tranquillitie, as muche as they are able. Heereby it appeareth with what spirite they are led, which enuie at all mennes felicitie, or else of rash iudgement, condemne them as no good Christians, who they see liue in any commodious or wealthy wise.

Iohn. 6
Math. 11. &c
1. Cor. 5

The immo-
cencie of
Paule.

After these things, Luke ioyneeth the ende of all this dooing, namely, howe all the assembly and auditozie brake hye and departed, being neuer a whitte the better by reason of the impedimentes before rehearsed. But thys is wonderfull, that Paule is absolued and acquitted againe by the consente of all menne, and yet for all that they sette him not at libertie. Whereby it appeareth howe little the worlde regardeth the state of the Godlye, whome they see afflicted wythoute deserte. The innocencie of Paule so often tymes tryed, maketh muche for the set-

ting

ting forth of the dignitie of the Christian fayth. Which thing also re-
proueth the temeritie of those men which cry out in these dayes, that the
doctrine of the Gospell is sedicious, seeing that Paule, a most earnest prea-
cher of the gospel, was able so oftentimes to purge himself from the crime
of sedition, before prophane and heathen Judges. Let no man therefore
be moved with the slaunders of this worlde, but being constant in the do-
ctrine of true fayth, let vs boldly serue God, which defendeth those that
worship him in the middle of the tempestes of this worlde, and giueth
them the inheritance of his kingdome, by Jesus Chryste our Loyde, to
whom be prayse, honour, power, and glory, for ever. Amen.

The. xxvij. Chapter vpon the *Actes of the Apostles.*

The. Clxvj. Homelie.

WHen it was concluded that we should sayle into Italie, they deliue-
red both Paule, and certayne other prisoners, vnto one named Iuli-
us, an vnder Captayne of Cæsars souldiours. And we entred into a shippe
of Adramicium, and loosed from lande, appoynted to sayle by the coastes
of Asia, one Aristarchus out of Macedonia, of the Countrey of Thessalo-
nia tarrying styll with vs. And the next day we came to Sidon. And Iulius
courteously intreated Paule, and gaue him libertie to goe vnto his friends,
and to refresh him selfe: and when we had launched from thence, we sayled
harde by Cypers, bicause the winds were contrary. And when we had say-
led ouer the sea of Cylicia and Pamphilia, we came to Myra, which is in
Lycia. And there the vndercaptayne founde a ship of Alexandria, that say-
led into Italie, and he put vs therein. And when we had sayled slowly many
dayes, and scarce were come ouer agaynst Cindus (bicause the winde with-
stoode vs) we sayled harde by the coste of Candy, ouer agaynst Salmo, and
with much worke sayled beyonde it, and came to a place which is called
the fayre hauens, nye whervnto was the citie of Lasca.



The Euangelist Luke in this
Chapter describeth the paynfull and
daungerous nauigation of Paule the A-
postle, sent vnto Rome to appeare before
Cæsar. Where surely at the first sighte,
suche great diligence of the holy Ghost
might seeme bayne & superfluous: but
if a man would weigh every thing tho-
roughly, he shold perceiue many things
in the same moste worthy to be knownen
and considered. For this Hystorie tea-
cheth vs what the state of the godly is
in this world. It setteth forth vnto vs

The argu-
ment of the
Chapter.

Paul is brought to Rome among malefactors.

Sa Valeri. Max. 16. Booke, and v. chapter. Esay. 53. Luke, 22.

Pauls companions.

Aristarchus

in Pauls examples of patience and constancie, it teacheth vs moreouer the infallible truth of Gods promises. For although al things in the world seemed to go crosse with Paul, & to hinder him from coming to Rome: yet the truth of God, which had promised he should be brought before Caesar, brusteth through al these impediments. There are yet besides this many other things full of comfort & instruction, which we shall consider in their places. First, is declared how the Apostle was sent vnto Rome, where mentis is made of one Iulius a Centurion or potie Capitayne, vnto whome Festus deliuered Paul among other prisoners to be carried. Here is to be noted a singular diligence of the Romanes in administering the lawe, considering they take suche paynes, and be at so great charges with sending of prisoners from one place to an other. There are also diuerse other examples of this thing, which gate them singular commendation and glory. Yea, it is euident that by this meane chiefly they aduanced the selues to so great a glory of Empire. And the Scripture playnly teacheth, both in the lxxij. Psalme, and in other places, that there is no more ready or commodious way than this, either to conserue, or to enlarge Empires and kingdomes. For that that fel out so luckely with the Romanes, we reade hath ben an help to many others, wherby to aspire & climb vp vnto power and glory. Agayne, we know how most flourishing kingdomes haue suddenly had a fall, when iustice and censure of publike lawes hath begun to be neglected. It behoueth vs chiefly to consider the case and state of the godly: for Paul is ioyned with other prisoners, who without all doubt were for the moste part greuous and haynous misdoers. So the scripture teacheth vs, that Chryste was numbred with the wicked: which also many times chaunced vnto the martyres. With whose examples it behoueth vs in these days to be encouraged, that we be not offended at the moste vniuste iudgements of the world. Moreover there appeareth in Pauls miserable case a singular document of Gods goodnesse, wherby it cometh to passe that the pitiful company of the prisoners hath such a comforter & counseler, through whose meanes we shall heare at length how they were all saued. And there is no doubt, but Paul vsed al maner of occasions to instruct & teach them the misteries of christian faith & religion, because we haue seene hitherto how earnestly he desired the saluation of al men. Thus God giueth vs singular occasiō, euen then to do wel, when he seemeth vtterly to haue no care of vs. Herevnto also belōg the things folowing: where we are taught y god had a speciall regarde of Paul in al these dangers. For first he ioyneth vnto him most faithful companions, to help & succour him with their presence & ministration. Among these was Luke the writer of this history, as appereth by the order of the whole story. The next Aristarchus the Macedonian, a mā without peradventure very rich, which was able to susteine so great charges. For he wēt out of Grece with Paul to Ierusalem: & although he saw him apprehended by y lewes, yet did he not forsake him, but for .ij. whol yeres together & more he did faithfully help him, & now he accompanieth him vnto Rome. Thus god bleth to ayde & succour his people, that they be not tempted aboue their strength: & when they are vtterly forsake of men, he is their defender. This exāple of Aristarchus is very notable, reproving flatterers & parasites which vse to measure frendship by profite, meaning to suffer nothing for the truthes sake. In somuch that they are ashamed of the martyrs of Christ.

But

But we must haue a respect vnto God the rewarder, which recompenseth the fayth of Aristarchus with immortall glory and inheritance of the kingdom of heauen. An other argument of Gods prouidence and goodnesse, we heare it is, that the Centurion is so friendly vnto Paule. For bothe he curteously intreateth him, and when he came to Sidon he giueth him leaue to go visite his friends, to recreat and refresh him selfe among them. The like we saw befoze in Lysias the Tribune, & Felix the Presidet. So Abdias in times passe was a patrone & protectour of the Prophets, and Ieremie had friends while he was in prison, that succoured him, bothe with helpe and counsaile. Reade the first of the Kings, the. 18. chapter, & Ieremie. 38. Of these things it behoueth vs also to take comfort, that we yelde not to the enterprises of tyrannes, but commend our selues and all our doings to God onely. Howbeit in this place we haue to consider Paule, who being in a citie very full of people, and standing on the sea coaste, where he might easily eather haue hid him selfe, or haue slipped away: yet woulde be no suche oportunitie and aduantage of escape. The causes were, both for that he shoulde haue done vniustly, to haue brought the Captayne in danger, which had wel deserued of him; and also for that he had learned by the Oracle, that he must go to Rome. We are taught by this example, that we must not seeke our owne safetie by any vnlawfull meanes. For if in our distresses there appeare no way of escape, but suche as is repugnant vnto charitie, fayth, and iustice: then is it certayne that God hath determined of vs otherwise, whose will and pleasure it is meete we obey, least while we make prouision for our body and goodes, we lose our soule.

Now foloweth a diligent and long description of their nauigation or sailing, the course wherof let them that are desirous to know euery thing, searche for in the Geographers tables. We haue to consider howe it was a paynefull and dangerous voyage, seeing it is expressely declared that the windes were agaynst them. Howbeit God could easily haue remedied these incomberaunces, who by many examples hath declared him selfe to be the Lord & ruler of the sea. But thus it pleased him to haue his chosen vessel tried, that the glory both of his truth & power might seme the more euidet. In the meane season it appeareth what state our life is in: verily a troublesome state, and like to a pilgrimage, wherin we see ne we trauels and dangers euery day appeare. But chiefly this is to be seene in the life of those that are godly, which is continually assaulted with treche cares and troubles. An example hereof we haue in Chryst our head, who allone as he was bozne found enemies, whose awaytes and trecheries made the whole course of his life vnpleasant & perillous. Paule also found euery the same, which waisting a long time with the craftes and awaytes of the Iewes, is at length committed to the sea, an element of all others most cruel, the perils wherof he had also befoze proued, as appereth by the eleuenth chapter of the second Epistle to the Corinthians. Infinite other examples of this kinde might be repeated if neede so were. Let vs rather marke the vse of these things, which is, to arme our selues with constant fayth, and to overcome al aduersitie, seeing it is euidet that there is prepared for vs rewardes of eternall rest in heauen, which we shall enjoy hereafter with Iesus Chryst: to whom bee prayse, honour, power, and glory, for euer. Amen.

The Centurion is
Pauls frēd.

Paul would
not flee, no
not when
he might.

Pauls voy-
age or nauig-
ation is ful
of danger.

The. Clxvij. Homelie.

WHen much time was spent, and when sayling was now icopardous, bycause also that they had ouerlong fasted, Paule put them in remembrance, and sayd vnto them: Sirs, I perceiue that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not of the lading and ship only, but also of our lyues. Neuerthelesse the vnder Captayne beleeued the gouernour and Master of the ship, more than those things which were spoken of Paule. And bicause the haven was not commodious to winter in, many toke counsell to depart thence, if by any meanes they might attayne to Phenices, and there to winter. Which is an haven of Candy, and lyeth towarde the South and Northwest winde. When the Southwinde blew, they supposing to obtaine their purpose, loosed vnto Asson, and sayled paste all Candy, but not long after there arose agaynst their purpose a flawe of winde out of the North-east, and when the shippe was caught, and could not resist the winde, we let hir go, and draue with the weather. But we were caryed into an Isle, which is named Clauda, and had muche worke to come by a bote, which they rooke vp, and vsed helpe, and made fast the shippe, fearing least they should fall into the Syrtes: and so they let downe a vessell, and were caryed. The next day when we were tossed with an exceeding Tempest, they lightned the ship, and the thirde day we cast out with our owne hande the takeling of the Shippe. When at the lasse neither the sunne nor starres appeared, no small tempest lay vpon vs. All hope that we should escape, was then taken away.



Dat that came to passe vnto the sonne of God, our sauiour Iesus Chryst, while he liued on the earth, to be emured and exercised with diuerse and dayly afflictions: the same Paule, both by his example in this place, and by expresse wordes in other places, teacheth vs, to remayne for all them which shall followe his steppes. For he that had nowe two whole yeres suffered to lye in bonds, and to feeble the greefes of imprisonment, and had tryed day from day the fresh awayts and trecheries of enemies, is nowe committed to a most fierce element, to try the daungerous tempestes of the sea, and at length to proue the misfortunes of unhappie shipwracke. For it was declared in the Homelie afore going, howe he came out of Syria, vnto the Isle of Candy by contrary windes, and very daungerous sayling. But yet followeth a description of a farre greater daunger, which at length we shall heare ended with shipwracke, the order and going forwarde whereof Luke hath reported very truely and diligently, bycause in this narration which at the firste sighte seemeth bare and barren, there fall out diuerse things which serue both for our learning and comforte.

Amongest the which this is worthy first to be noted, that God admonisheth bothe the souldiours and Mariners in tyme of the eminent daunger. For where they had layne at anker a long whyle in the fayre haun,

neere

God warneth vs of danger, and giueth vs counsell in time.

neare vnto Lalea, and winter nowe drew on. The Jewes faste being nowe ouerpaste, which was vsed to bee kepte in the seventh moneth, which with vs falleth out betweene September and October; Paule diligently exhorteth them to putte off their bowe till an other tyme. Whiche thing it is euident that hee dyd not without the Reuelation of the holy Gholle, bycause he playnely foresheweth the daungers that afterwarde followed. And heere we haue chieflly to consider, howe God neuer forsaketh those that are his. For where he woulde haue all men to be saued, he warneth them of dangers in tyme, that they may take heede to them selues, and deuise some meanes howe to escape: and he attempereth his warnings in diuerse sortes. For sometimes he warneth vs by his Prophetes and preachers of his worde, which is his most common way & blage, and one of the chiefe tokens of his good will towards vs: touching the which thing see Amos the Prophet in his third chapter. Sometimes he reuealeth vnto vs privately, by our friends and acquaintaunce, in what daunger we be. He hath also his tokens of diuerse sortes, which declare his wrath towards sinners. Furthermore, he nippeth vs sometime by the eare with the secret inspiration of his spirite, and with our owne conscience. And we reade that some haue ben admonished by the ministerie of Angels: all which things are so common & vsuall, that we neede not declare them by any examples. Let vs learne at the least wise to acknowledge the goodnesse of god, and not to contemne faithfull & wholsome admonitions, lest we be the authors of our owne destruction. For this is the ende of the froward and disobedient, as the examples of these men also shal afterwarde declare. But befoze we entreat therof, we haue somthings to say of Paule. For we heard befoze howe he was tolde by the heauenly Oracle, that he should go vnto Rome: which thing it is playne he firmly beleueed. Yet he abused not the Oracle, to put him selfe in daunger without cause, and so to tempte God. But rather being admonished of the daunger by a newe reuelation, he beleueeth it, and lyke wise admonisheth other to haue a regarde vnto them selues. Whereby it appeareth, that the doctrine of fayth and prouidence of God, maketh not men to bee rather and tempters of God. For euen as Chryst requirerth wisdom in those that be his: so when soeuer God offereth vs any lawfull and due meanes of escape, it is certayne he would not haue vs to put our selues in daunger. Therefore it becommeth vs to vse these meanes of auoydaunce with feare and godlynesse.

Furthermore, Paules wholsome counsaile is not accepted, but to the greate hynderaunce and losse of them all is contemned. Where it be-
houeth vs to consider the proceeding of all the matter, that wee may learne thereby howe it cometh to passe, that a greate many despyse wholsome counsaile, and procure their owne losse, and sometymes destruction. The firste cause alleaged in this place is, for that the Centurion thought good to beleue the gouernour and maister of the shippe, rather than Paule. And in so doing, if a man woulde consider the reason of the fletche, he seemeth it dyd very wisely, yet he erreth, and that fowely, bycause he esteemeth and regardeth the counsaile, not according to the cause, but after the authoritie of men, otherwyle he woulde easily haue percepued, that it was not without a cause that Paule sayde it was teo-

Ccccc. i.

pardous

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dot.

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2. that we myght
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Reason 1.

pardous sayling, considering the wynter drewe on. And this is a very common errour, specially if God giue counsaile by the Ministers of hys worde. For, to giue eare vnto them, it seemeth to many men, not onely a greuous, but also a very haynous offence. And there are now a dayes euery where Achabes and Sedechias, whiche disdayne to heare the Micheases and Ieremyes, and thinke they them selues can giue beste counsaile, or else take vnto them other counsellors, whiche they thynke are more agreable wth their humours and conditions. Whereby most tymes it cometh to passe, that in daungers of warre wee flee vnto barbarous Nations, and bloudy Souldiours, to leagues of Princes, and to Fortresses and Holdes: in syknesse to Physitions onely, in neede and pouertie vnto vnlawfull artes, and wee geue eare vnto them which wee suppose haue had good successe heeretofore in lyke enterpryses. After thys sorte men are wrapped in many euilles and incumberaunces, whiche they myghte easily eschue, if they woulde admitte the worde of GOD onely, and the aduises and counsailes taken out thereof.

The other cause why they despised Pauls counsaile was, for that the Rode or Hauen seemed not to them commodious inoughe to Wynter in. For thys cause they drewe vpp their Ankers, meaning to seeke some more commodious harbour. The same thing stoppeth vpp the way vnto many wholesome counsailes, bycause wee bee not contente wth present commodities, but seeke others, in our iudgemente better. For thus it cometh to passe, that whyle wee followe the insatiable and blinde affections of the fleshe, wee entangle our selues in the snares of sinne, and bee authours of our owne greatest myschieses. Thys chaunced vnto these Souldiours and Maryners, who despising the Hauen that God had appoynted them, at length by Shipwracke losse all that they hadde, and were also in hazarde of their lyues. Allee haue examples heeretofore euery where in Hystories, among whiche, thys one that wee reade of the Israelites is very singular, whiche beeyng weery of their present state and condition, desired to haue a king, and could be induced by no reasons, broughte by Samuell, to keepe styll that kinde of pollicie or gouernement that God had giuen them. Iulius Cæsar wyrteth the lyke thing of our Ancestours, the Heluctians, who beeing weerie of their natie soyle and Countrey, went about to plant them selues in Fraunce, to their great losse and hinderaunce. The vse of all these thinges is, to make vs contented with the present state that God giueth vs, and to seeke no further. For by so doing we shall bydle the affections of the fleshe, and kepe our selues in doing our duetie. See what Paule hath wyrtten hereof. 1. Tim. 6. But to retorne agayne vnto our men, there is a third thing that maketh them stiffe in their purpose, because they thought the south wynde was very good to go away withall. And there is no doubt but a great many of them mocked Paule, as one that woulde haue hindered the towarde nesse of such successe by his counsell, if they woulde haue giuen eare vnto him. But not long after they are greuously punished for their disobediẽce. This is a very notable policy of the diuel, who commonly bleseth to make the beginnings of sinne to seme easie and prosperous, thereby to entise vs the rather with the hope of good successe. For as sinne flattereth and fauoreth vpon our corrupt nature: so in the beginning the successe thereof seemeth

very

very fortunate: whereby it cometh to passe, that wee being drunken with fortune, doo wickedly despise all wholesome admonitions, and many tymes with laughing clappe our handes, and hyfle at them. Wee haue examples heereof euery where, therefore wee neede not stande long heerein. Thus the things that put adulterers, drunkardes, souldiours, and all kinde of mischeuous doers in good hope of marvellous successe, are not long after the causes of gret calamities: which thing the contempters of Pauls counsel, founde true, as now shall be declared.

For not long after, arose a Northeast winde, notable even by the proverbe, which turneth their whole shippe hyther and thither round about, like as it had ben a wheele. So they proue to their great hinderaunce and losse, that suche can not long well prosper or go forthward, as go about any thing agaynst Gods forbode. For most times it cometh to passe, that when they thinke they are in most prosperitie, some sodayne and vnlooked for calamitie quite ouerwhelmeth them. Whereof wee haue examples euery day, in adulterers, theues, couetous persons, hired souldiers, and to conclude, in al the vngodly, which the prophet sayth, liue not out halfe their days. And this may be seene, not onely in private men, but also in kinges domes and common weales, which are enlarged by violence and bountie, teoufnesse agaynst the lawes of God. For commonly some unhappie ruine throbeth them also downe, even when all men thinke they are in most safetie, and that their power is inuincible. This thing the fall of the Assyrians and Babilonians teacheth vs, the ouerthrowes of the Persians, the destruction of the Greeces, and that ruine of the Romane Empire, which happened beyonde the expectation of all the worlde. Therefore there is no cause that eyther wee shoulde beane insolent in proude of our prosperitie, or bee grieved and offended at others. But rather let the worde of God be the squire and rule of all our doings, whose guiding if wee followe, wee shall neither erre from the truthe, nor prouoke the wrath of God agaynst vs.

Nowe followeth a more diligent description of that danger that they procured into themselves. For a floure or tempest of winde caught the shippe with such violence, that they were not able to withstande it, and therefore they let hir dyue whither she woulde with winde and weather. And although they were carried vnto the Ilande of Clauda, and seemed then to be in good comfort, yet by and by after they were disappointed of that hope, and begonne to bee in danger bothe of losing their hote, and whole shippe also. By which example wee are taughte, that their force is altogether in vayne, whome God by hys Justice persecuteth. For wherueuer God is the Lord of Hostes, he is able to arme even the smallest or least things that are, agaynst his enemies, so that they shall be able to vanquish and subdue them. Thus the wynde, which is the bayned and vncertainest thing that is, when God so pleaseth is able to subuerse and turne all things upside downe. And wee reade haue the losse of the furnace, frogges, Lye, Cimices, flies, and moste small wormes were the conquerours of Pharao. Let no man therefore truste eyther in his owne strength, or stryue agaynst God, going aboute to vanquish his sinne. For although sometime the stubborne and disobedient seeme to haue some hope of helpe: yet whatsoever helpe they seek for

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in the flesh, they are vnperfecte, deceitefull, and vayne. The onely and certayne way of helpe and saluation is, to turne vnto God, and to be reconciled vnto him.

What hap-
peneth to
such as will
lose nothing
at Gods bid-
ding.

Beside all these euils or distresses, they are compelled to caste out their goodes with their owne handes. And now their mindes are so muche altered, that where before they thought they dyd not ryde commodiously inough by Lasea, they are now sayne of their owne accorde to throw out, euen their necessities, and are carefull howe to escape wth their lyfe, where before their onely care was for commoditie and deligh-tes. This is commonly the state of all suche; which to obey God, wyll suffer no losse of any of the thinges which serue to mayntayne their ryot and pleasure. For at lengthe they are compelled to spende and to throwe away all, and lose those thinges, without the which lyfe can not bee mayntayned. For thys is a common and true saying: That that Chryste wyll not take, the Chequer wyll rake. And mooste tymes suche as wyll not hazarde their goodes in the quarell of fayth and religion, are moostelies for tytants to tye vpon. Likewise they that will not brydle their gluttonous luste, and desire of fraunching and feeding (as God commaundeth them) are deliuered to the Whisicians and Chirurgicalians, to be beryed and tormented. Beside that, for the mooste parte suche men are so troubled in their consciences, that they woulde be glad to redeme the rest and quiet thereof with all their goodes and riches, if it were possible. Let vs therefore dedicate our selues, and all that is ours vnto Chryst, which promisseth a lyberall and bountifull rewarde to all them, which for his names sake suffer losse of lyfe, or worldely goodes. Matthew. 19. Marke. 10. Let vs also caste away all those thynges that may hynder our saluation, because wee knowe that if that be once losse, it can neuer bee recovered agayne.

Paule hym-
selfe is in
hazarde with
the despisers
of God.

Finally, for a great many dayes, neither the Sunne, nor the Starres shyned, and so at lengthe they were oute of all hope of succoure. And thys is lykewyse a common thyng, that they which refuse to walke in the lyghte of Gods worde, are whapped in dangerous and deadly darknesse. For wee haue none other Love starre giuen vs, by whose leading wee are able to holde our course and ryght waye in the tempestuous Seas of this worlde. Here is to bee observed howe God suffereth Paule also to bee in daunger, and to bee mooste grieuou-ly tempted among these malefactours, insomuche that hee toucheth hym vnto prayer, and hath neede to bee comforted at Gods hande, as the thynges following wyll declare. Thys is the state of the goodly in this worlde, which offendeth many menne, because they see them in suche lyke perill and hazarde, as the notorious dogges vnder the bed. And yet is their state of a farre other sorte. For all thinges worke vnto them for their profite and commoditie, and beryng of a good conscience in the myddest of their daungers. They knowe that Goddes eares are open vnto their prayers: and sayng them selues vpon hys promyses, they wayte also for strength of hym to bryde out the burthen, and looke for their deliuerie in due tyme and season. Where in the meane season the wycked are troubled wth galytie consciences, and for the mooste parte their daungers are ended wth their destruction.

Let

Lette vs therfore folowe the example of Paule, and wel marke the loades-
tarre of Gods word, that if happely we chaunce to come in danger in this
vnhappy world, we may yet haue our hope of saluation firmly fixed and
set in God, who will not suffer his people to be tēpted aboue their strength:
and will giue vs happy successe, and deliuer vs out of all daungers, and at
length wil take vs into the kingdome of his sonne Iesus Christ: to whom
be praise, honoz, power, and glozy for euer. Amen.

The. Clxviij. Homelie.

BVt after long abstinence, Paule stode forth in the midst of them, and
saide, Sirs, you should haue hearkened to me, and not haue loosed from
Candie, neither to haue brought vnto vs this harme and losse. And now I
exhort you to be of good cheare. For there shall be no losse of any mannes
life among you, sauing of the shippe only. For there stode by me this night
the Angel of God. Whose I am, and whom I serue, saying: feare not Paule,
thou muste bee broughte before Cæsar, and loe, God hath giuen thee all
them that saile with thee. Wherefore Sirs, be of good cheare, for I beleue
God, that it shall be euen as it was tolde me. Howebeit we must be cast into
a certaine llande.

WE declared of late, the horrible tempest that Paul and his
companie were tossed in, which Luke saith he did blowe so
boystefully, that they had no more hope of any escape or
succoz. But some man might heere maruell, howe Paule
in the meane season behaued himselfe, either towards
God, whose promises seemed here to quaille, or towards
his companions, which through their rashnesse and diso-
bedience, had procured themselves this euill chaunce. Now be it, his talke
which the Euangelist reporteth in this place, dothe evidently declare all
this matter, which for many causes is worthy to be singularly cōsidered.

First, the time is noted, and what case they stood in, when Paule made
his oration: verely euen when they were greatly a hungred, & in the midst
of the perils that hitherto haue bene described. And it was not without
a cause, that hee spake not to them before this time, for while they were
troubled about their businesse, he shuld haue had no commoditie therfore.
But now being wearied bothe in body and minde, and being sette downe
without all hope of any succoure, he sheweth them both counsel and com-
fort in very good time. Whereby we gather, that he despaired not, nor
was not overcome with feare in the middle of daungers, but by Prayers
fled vnto God, which so comforted him, that he was able to comforte and
strengthen others. By this example we are taught, that we muste not by
and by despaire in time of daunger, but put our whole hope and trust in
God, which neuer forsaketh those that are his, as both his promises, and
also the examples of a great many of men do abundantly declare. Ther-
fore this is a shamefull erreure of those men, which as soone as they see no
more hope in man, either vterly despaire, or else turne them vnto saunders,

Paul giveth
comforte
and counsel
in aduersi-
tie.

doct:
Exod: 14:13
1st Cor: 10:13
1st Cor: 13:8

reason
faith is
& Heb: 11:1
2 Kings
6:16
2 power of
god, Dan: 3:17
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could cure him but god 2 kings 20 5 or Job: 42. 10 helpeth manerly pph:

and other vnlawfull meanes, and seeke counsell and helpe at their hands. But let vs see pauls oration being very shorte, according as the time serueth, but yet such, as containeth in it many things, moste worthy to be considered.

He modestly rebuketh their former disobedience.

First, he rebraideth them with their disobedience, whereby they procured themselves so great a daunger. And he beginneth therewith, partly to make them knowe that their sinne was the cause of this euill: and partly to teach them by this present mischance to heare him the more willingly. This dothe he yet moste modestly, so that he seemeth rather to admonish them of their duetie, than to cast them in the teethe with their misery. We are taught by this place, to reprove in deede the rashnesse and disobedience of those, which procure their owne mischefe: but yet we must not ouer bitterly rebraide those that are already afflicted, and miserable enough, least we heape sorow vpon sorow, on those that mourne. And verily, they are much to blame, who being not able while things goe well, to do any good by their owne counsell, will in aduersitie bitterly taunte and deride other mennes deuises, who as they are vniust iudges of other men: so they adde calamitie to calamitie, a thing most disagreeing from christian charitie. Also Paule by his example reproveth those men, whose deuise at the first being refused, will neuer afterwarde giue any counsell againe, nor haue to doe with those, who before would not harken to their counsell.

He comforteth.

This done, Paule with great boldnesse of minde, comforteth them. I exhort you (saith he) to be of good cheare, for there shall bee no losse of any mannes life among you, saue of the ship only. Where wee haue cheefely to consider the dignitie of Paule, who though he were in bandes, yet farre excelled all the residue. For he seeming of all other the moste miserable, was able alone, in greatest ieperdie and danger, both to comforte and counsell them. And this is the very peculiere work of Christ, that in his ministers, when they seeme the moste despised persons of all other, he doth most gloriously triumphe. The examples of Martires teach vs this thing, which being in the middle of fire, and horrible torments, both by their voice and example, partly feared the beholders, and partly moued them to like constancie of faith. Whereunto this also is to be referred, that now a dayes also we see those that are giuen altogether to the world and to linne, if at any time they be in sicknesse or other daunger, they will seeke counsell and helpe, at the onely ministers of the worde, whome otherwile they yet hate worse than the Deuill.

He alleageth the Oracle.

Furthermore, least Paule might seeme some haire trifler or bulie body, he alleageth an Oracle, saying: For there stode by me this night, the angell of the Lord, whose I am, and whome I serue, saying: feare not Paule, thou must be brought before Caesar, and loe, God hath giuen vnto thee, all those, that faile with thee. Heere euery worde hath his weight, and teacheth vs diuers things worthy to be considered. For first God declareth vnto vs, his goodnesse, which is so great that he cannot forget the same, not when he correcteth vs according to our desertes. Neither is he alwayes angry, but comforteth vs in the middell of afflictions, and helpeth vs with his counsell, that we be not tempted farther than we be able to beare: and he hath also suche a care of vs, that he hath appointed the Angels to be occupied in safeguarding vs: wherof we haue hitherto seene diuers examples.

Further=

Furthermore, Pauls plainnesse and simplicitie vsed about faith and religion, is to bee considered, for wee knowe hee was laide in bandes for the faithes sake, yet hee confessed the same freely, and plainly. In so muche that he boldly affirmeth, that he is not onely the seruant of God, but also worshipping him. This is it that Christe requireth of vs, where hee commaundeth vs to confesse him before men. And wee reade howe the Martires also, did folowe this example of Paule, who would not so much, as dissemble their faith in Christe, muche lesse flatly deny it. Moreouer Pauls wordes teache vs, that it is not enoughe, for vs to say we belong vnto God, for as muche as it is euident, that the Devils also, are subiecte to his commaundement. But God requireth of vs all kinde of worshipping and obedience: which excepte wee performe, the professing of Chrystes name, shall serue more to condemne vs, than to saue vs. Yet further this place teacheth vs, howe profitable it is to dwell among holy menne and worshippers of God. For as God gaue vnto Paule the liues of all them that were passengers with him: so is it euident, that he hath oftentimes spared many which haue deserued destruction, for a fewes sake that haue bene good. For every man knoweth what the scriptures say of Noe, Lot, Moses, and infinite others.

And yet these Examples muste not bee racked, to the ende to attribute godly honoure vnto Saintes, and to aske of them such things as belong onely vnto God for to giue. For the vse of them serueth to farre other purpose. For God partely maketh the wicked beholding vnto his seruants, to the ende they may liue the more safely and commodiously among them: and partely by suche testimonies commendeth their faith and religion. And as the godly vse to be profitable to those that liue with them: so again a fewe wicked, when they are lette runne at the long line, are moste times the destruction of whole common weales, as may be seene in the Example of Ionas, for whose sake we reade that bothe the Mariners and all the Passengers were in ieoperdie. Which things, if all men would wel marke and obserue, the godly should both be better regarded, and the companie of wicked men should be more detested.

Laste of all, Paule concludeth his Oracion, and biddeth them to be of good cheare. Hee addeth this moreouer: For I beleue, that it shall be, euen as it was tolde mee. And for that they should the lesse dout heereof, hee declareth howe and after what sorte they should escape: saying they muste bee caste oute into a certaine Ilande. Where we are taughte, that the promises of God muste bee receiued by faith, bicause so they be ratified and confirmed: not for that Goddes truthe dependeth vpon vs, but bicause he promiseth vs his helpe and saluation vpon this condition, that none shall haue it, but those onely that beleue it. In the Gospell, we haue examples heereof euery where. Heere is one thing very comfortable, that althoughe there bee but a fewe that beleue, yet God can easily discern betweene them and the wicked, and hath a regarde of those that be his, as the scripture teacheth vs it happened in times past to Iosue and to Caleb, whome onely God broughte into the lande of promise, bicause they onely beleued his promises.

Let vs diligently occupy our selues in the consideration of these things, and wheras God offereth vs comfortes and counsels of saluation in these

The promises of God must be taken holde of by faith.

dayes also, let vs embrace them with stedfast faith: for so shall it come to passe, that when we haue sailed through the tempestuous sea of this life, we shall be brought to heauen, the haue of eternall saluation, through Iesus Christ our Lord: to whome be praise, honoure, power and glory for euer. Amen.

The. Clxix. Homelie.

BUt when the fourtenth night was come, as we were sailing in Adria, about midnight, the shipmen deemed that there appeared some country vnto them: and sounded and founde it. xx. fadomes. And when they had gone a litle further, they sounded again, and found. xv. fadomes. Then fearing least they should haue fallen vppon some rocke, they cast foure ankers out of the sterne, and wished for the day. As the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let downe the boate into the sea vnder a coloure, as though they wold haue cast ankers out of the foreship: Paule saide vnto the vnder captain, and to the souldiers: except these abide in the ship, yee can not be safe. Then the souldiers cut of the rope of the boate, and let it fall away. And when the day began to appeare, Paule besought them all to take meate, saying: this is the fourtenth day, that yee haue taried and continued fasting, receiuing nothing at all. Wherefore I pray you to take meate: for this no doubt is for your health. for there shall not an haire fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he tooke breade, and gaue thanks to God, in presence of them all, and when he had broken it, he begun to eat. Then were they all of good chere, and they also toke meate.



Although God suffereth his seruantes many wayes to be tempted, yet (as we haue oftentimes declared) he assisteth them both with counsell and comforte: so that they be not overcome with temptations. An euident example heereof, we haue in this storie. For where the tempest increased so vehemently, that there was no more hope left in man, God sendeth his Angell vnto Paule, to renewe the former promise: wherewith he was a freche so confirmed, that he was able to confirme and comforte others also. And God did not with vaine wordes only holde the miserable creatures in hope, but most faithfully performed that he promised: as we shall see, when we come to the place. But before Luke commeth thereto, he declareth what was done in the meane season, and how some beleued the promise of god, and some not, touching euery of the which points we shall speake in order.

And first of all, we haue to consider the Mariners, who being in the Adriaticke sea, and perceiuing by certaine markes, that the lande was not farre off, vnto all the diligence that they coulde to gette vnto the shore. For letting downe a plumbet of lead, by a long line, they sounded for the depth of the sea, and prepared all other things necessary for that present season, which might seeme to be a worke of faith, considering they so buckled and framed themselves vnto the promise of God. But when they had cast out

their

The incredulitie and distrust of the Mariners.

their plumbet the seconde tyme, and perceyued that the sea wared beie
 chaule, being stricken with a newe feare, and forgetting the promise and
 oracle of God, they go aboute dishonestly to runne awaye, for they hoyle
 ouer the boate, and gette them downe into it, and make as though they
 woulde hoyle out the anker: & aforeship: where as they meant to prouide
 for themselves, and to leaue the passengers destitute of all hope and for-
 coute. Here appeareth the propertie of the fleshe, and of all suche as pur-
 pose to followe the waye and reason thereof. These men at the firste are
 deligheted with the promyses of God, and frame themselves accord-
 ingly, that is, when the successe of things agreeth with the promyses, and
 when they thinke euery thing will go forwarde and well. But as soone
 as daungers begyn onco to appeare that dasheth their hope of successe, they
 playnely renounce their fayth, and turne them to the counsels of the fleshe,
 and shewe themselves moste dishoneste persons bothe toward God and
 man. And that these Mariners dyd, we see the people of Israel dyd also,
 who when they fyrste hearde that God had promysed to sette them at li-
 bertie, embraced the deuice and counsell of God with great reuerence. But
 Pharaos bexed with the demaunde or request of Moyses and Aaron, began
 to handle them more seruilely than befoze, then forgot they the promise of
 God, and fell to reuyling, saying: The Lord looke vnto you and iudge you,
 which hath made the fauour of vs, to stinke in the eyes of Pharaos, and in the
 eyes of his seruantes, and haue put a sworde in their hande to sleie vs. And
 the same people when they shoulde go out of Egypt laden with golde and
 costly apparell, tooke their iourney ioyfully. But when they came to the
 red Sea, and sawe the Host of their enemyes harde at their haches, they
 by and by accused Moyses and Aaron, the faythfull seruantes of God, of
 treason and murther, Exod. 14. Agayne being miraculously deliuered out
 of that daunger, they declared their ioye of myndes byt by singing. But
 anon after perceyuing want and scarcitie of meate and drinke, they turne
 agayne to their murmuring and complayning. What neede we re-
 hearse this of the Israelites, seeing we haue euery where in these dayes
 the lyke examples? And this is commonly the chiefe cause why men fall
 from the fayth, and forgetting the commaundementes of God, neglecte
 their dutie. Let vs learne therefore to abandon the counsell of the fleshe,
 which so disagreeeth with the worde of God, and in ouertemptations haue
 a respect onely vnto hys worde and not vnto the fleshe: for the fleshe by
 reason it can see nothing; but the presente state of things, doth quickly
 dispayne. But true sayng grounded vpon the worde of God onely, cannot
 fall vnto solter, because he knoweth that God is omnipotent, of whose
 wyll he is certified by hys worde. See the example of Abraham whiche
 Paule handleth in the fourth to the Romanes diligently and trimly.
 Agayne in these mariners we may see, what the propertie of suche bolde
 and confident persones is, as despyse all counsell, and refuse godly
 and faythfull admonitions. For thus we see they dyd befoze, where
 they perswaded the iustition to sayle from Cana, contrary to the coun-
 sell of Paule. But when they had brought bothe their shippes, and others in
 daunger, then were they lyke the Mariners afraide, and sought dishonestly to
 forsake their tackle and compaignes. This is the propertie of all those
 whiche are dyoken in the affayre of their owne wyldome. The lyke

The proper-
 tie of the
 fleshe in dan-
 ger.

Exod. 5

The proper-
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The proper-
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The proper-
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 bolde.

partes also play seditious persones, and those that are aucthoures of rebellion in common weales, when daungers are on euery side at hand, they conuey themselves away. Thus Chore when he had made a stire and bproare through oute the campe, he setteth himselfe quiet in hys tente. Num. 16. And Absalon while his souldiours are in the fight, rideth himselfe vpon a Mule, taking his pleasure and pastime, when all other were in daunger. These examples teache vs to suspect suche kinde of men, and not to despise the wholesome counsell of sage and sober persons, which we see agreeable with the worde of God.

Paule commaundeth to stay the Marriners.

Nowe let vs retorne vnto Paule, who throughe the secreete instincte of the holy Ghoste, perceiuing the Marriners intent, admonished the Captaine and souldiours to disappointe this thing. Here we haue diligently to consider the wordes of Paule. Except these men (sayth he) abide in the ship, you can not be safe. Yet God before this, had promised them all their safetie, whose Counsels can not be frustrate or made baine. Howe then can they not escape, except the Marriners abide in the Shippe? Doth the truthe of Goddes promise depende vppon the faile Marriners? But Paule reasoneth not in this place of the absolute power of god, who might easily haue deliuered them oute of all daunger, without helpe eyther of Marriners or Shippe. But bicause hee had no certaine promise of miraculous deliuey, yea hee was tolde that they muste all be cast a lande into a certaine Ilande: hee thoughte the order of nature, and the remedies that were at hande, were not to be despised, least by ouermuche confidence and truste in Goddes promise, hee shoulde make them to tempt God. Which Example teacheth vs, that the prouidence of God and the faithe that consisteth therein, is no lette vnto the godly, to vse all other lawfull and ordinary meanes.

The right vse of Gods instrumēt or meanes.

Prouer. 31

For God will haue the order appoynted by him to bee obserued, as by many Examples may bee declared. In sowing of corne the Scripture teacheth vs, that nothing succedeth, except God giue the increase. But the same Scripture testifieth, that God hath appointed this order that the ground shoulde bee tilled by oure labour, and so muste receiue blessing from heauen, and bee made fitte to beare corne. So in the gouernance of an house, wee knowe that all endeuour is superfluous, unless the Lord builde the house. And yet in the scripture diligent and careful householders are commended: and in setting forth the praises of a good husband or matrone, the holy Ghoste mighte seeme almost too industrious and careful. Therefore Paule dothe well, in thinking the Marriners oughte not to bee lette goe, although hee nothing doubted in the promise of God: following the Example of Christe, who where hee certainly knewe that he was commended to the ministrie and tuition of the Angels, coulde yet neuer be perswaded, to tempte God, in casting himselfe downe from the pinnacle of the Temple. Yet we must take heede, that in vsing these lawfull meanes, wee attribute not too muche vnto them, and so swaue from the way of faith, which teacheth vs to haue our eyes fixed vpon God only.

The faithe of the captaine and souldiours.

But letting passe these men, let vs consider the captaine and the souldiers, who obeyed the wordes of Paule, and by and by let asunder the ropes that the boate was tied with; so let the boate fall into the sea. This is a singular token of faith. For by this meanes they spoile themselves of the boate, which

might

might haue stode them in great steade, in the present perill of shipwack. But they had already learned to their losse and hynderaunce, that there was no greater safegarde of life, than that which Paule had taught them was in God. Therefore they thoughte good to bee obedient vnto him, howe soeuer the matter fell out. Lette vs followe the example of these menne, that though we beleue not at the beginning, yet at the least wise being taught with oure daungers and damage, we may beleue the word of God, and shew our selues obedient vnto the same.

Howbeit Luke againe sheweth howe Paule comforted them, counselling them, furthermore howe to doe. For he exhorteth them to fall to their meate, alleaging most weightie reasons of his so bydding. The firste hee borroweth of the time. This (saythe hee) is the fouretenthe daye, whiche yee haue remayned fasting and taken nothing. Heereby he declareth the greate teoperdie they were in, wherewith they were so encombred, that they had scarce leasure to thinke of any meate: certaynely all that whyle they made no ordinarie meales or repastes. The seconde reason hee borroweth of necessitie. For this is expedient for your health. Otherwise although yee escape drowning, ye wil dye of hunger. Thirdly he repeateth the promise of God, wyth greate truste and confidence: For there shall not one haire fall from the head of any of you. And thus he answereth the obiection of them that might haue sayde, meate had bene to little purpose or profite for them that shortly after muste perishe and die, at length hee prouoketh them by example. For when he had thus sayd, he toke bread and gaue thanks to God in the sighte of them all, brake it, and beganne to eate, shewing no token of any fearefull or dismayed minde. Thus hee cheareth the mindes of them all, putting them in good hope of life, and to take their meate also, that they might be able to beare out the laboures and brutes that were at hande: and heere maye we see the propertie of true faythe. For the nearer the daunger of shipwacke drew, and the lesse hope appeared, the more bolde in minde Paule wareth: insomuche as hee alone was able to encourage and embolden all the other. Where also it appeareth that they which are indued with true faiche, are profitable not onely vnto them selues, but also vnto all others: considering we see Paule alone ruleth all things, and comforteth and counsellet all menne. Lette vs therefore learne to make muche of suche menne, seeing the Histories of all nations testifie that the contemning of suche good menne, hath bene the destruction of greate numbers. Moreover this is most worthye to be obserued, howe Paule in suche a daunger going to his meate so hastily, forgetteth not to say grace, and that in the sighte of all menne. This thing becommeth the godly, yea it is of righte required of all menne, seeing we confesse in our prayer, that God feedeth vs with our dayly bread, and that our meate cannot prosper with vs vlesse it bee blessed of God. Whiche thing was the cause that Chrysostome also commended thys vsage so often vnto vs, by his owne example. Let those Hogges therefore bee ashamed bothe of their unthankfulness and ungodlynesse, whiche goe vnto the table, without eyther any reuerence or giuing of thanks, and scoffingly vse to bypasse suche men as too superstitious, whome they see followe the examples of Chrysostome and hys Apostles. These fellows are lyke one daye to buye theyr stubbournesse full deare.

Paule exhorteth them to take meat.

The nature or propertie of fayth.

The discipline of the Table.

But let vs remember the goodnesse of God, and doe oure duetie as well in aduersitie as in prosperitie, and god wil not faile vs of his help, who hath chosen vs to be his children, and made vs heirs of his heavenly kingdom, through his sonne Iesus Christ our sauoure: to whome be praise, honoꝝ, power, and glory for ever. Amen.

The. Clxx. Homelie.

WE were all together in the ship, two hundred three score and sixtene soules. And when they had eaten inough, they lightned the shippe, and cast out the wheate into the sea. When it was day, they knewe not the lande, but they spied a certaine haven with a banke, into the which, they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the shippe. And when they had taken vp the ankers, they committed them selues vnto the sea, and loosed the rudder bandes, and hoised the maine saile to the winde, and drew to land. And when they chaunced on a place which had the sea on both sides, they thrust in the shippe, and the foreship stucke faste and moued not, but the hinderparte brake with the violence of the wauies. The souldiours counsell was to kill the prisoners, least any of them, when he had swome out, should runne away. But the vndercaptaine willing to saue Paule, kepte them from their purpose: and commaunded that they which coule swim, should cast themselues first into the sea, and escape to lande: and the other he commaunded to goe some on bourdes, and some on broken peeces of the ship. And so it came to passe, that they escaped all safe to lande.



God is faithfull and true in his promises, but yet he suffereth the faith of his people to be tried sundry and many wayes: not that hee taketh any delite in our miseries and complaints, but because it maketh greatly for the confirmation of our faith: considering we see that the truthe of God ouercommeth in all things, and can bee hindered no manner of wayes. And to this end is this history also to be referred, where God saueh Paule and his company from drowning, as hee promised hee would doe, and yet in the meane season, sometimes exercised their faith with diuers temptations. This shall most evidently appeare, if we consider euery thing heerein in order.

The number of them which were with Paule in the same shippe, was two hundred three score and sixtene soules. It as is declared pleased the holy Ghoste, to haue this number plainly expressed, partly for that the truthe of God might appeare the more certainly vnto vs, and partly that the miracle of the deliuerie, might seeme the more euident. For to here all men knewe there were so many in number, none of them could be lacking, but the residue must know of it. And where in the danger of shipwacke, euen a few be to hinder and let one an other, while eche man prouideth for his owne safetie, with the perill of an other, God evidently put forth his hand, in that he broughte so many together safe and sound vnto the shore. Whereby wee may gather, that it is as easie a thing for God, to saue a

number

number, as a few. For as he hath all things in tale, and his providence stretcheth it selfe, even vnto heares and little sparrowes: so is his power infinite and vnmeeasurable, and can be overcome neither with multitude of those that haue neede of his helpe, neither with greatnesse of daunger. Thus brought he all the Israelites together safe through the red Sea: which was as easie for him to do, as to deliuer Moses onely, being caste out into the Riuer of Nilus. In like sort he fedde all the people of Israel fortie yeres in the wilderness miraculously, as easily as he afterwarde fedde Elias by the ministerie of Rauens. Herevnto king Asa had a respect, when being ready to ioyne battayle with an innumerable multitude of Ethiopians, he made his prayer vnto God in this wise: Lorde, it is no hard thing with thee to helpe, either many, or them that haue no power. It is very profitable for vs to acknowledge God to be suche an one. For so doing, we shall be feared neither with our owne wante of power and myserie, nor with any multitude of daungers be brought into desperation.

Moreouer, when all they in the Shippe had taken meate, as Paule exhorted them, they lightned the Shippe of all things in it, insomuch that they caste the corne also ouer the boorde. For we heard before, how they had caste out the Marchaundise and Tackle of the Shippe. And to this passe did necessitie driue these delicate persons, whiche contrary to the will of God woulde needes seeke a more commodious haven, and would not bee contented with their present state and condition. In the meane season, this is a singular argument of their faith, which would throw ouer boorde their corne also. For except they had certaynely beleued that God would haue saved them, they woulde neuer haue bene perswaded to haue caste away that succour of their lyfe that onely remayned. But this example is set out for vs to follow, that wee also, when God so appoynteth it, shoulde likewise willingly forsake those things, without the which it seemeth our lyfe can not be mayntayned. This wee see Abraham hym selfe did, the Apostles, and many others, whose sayth the holy Ghost commendeth in the Scriptures.

Now followeth the description of the woracke very breefe, yet suche as teacheth vs, that many thinges fell out therein, which had bene able to quayle the sayth, both of Paule, and others, if they would haue harkened rather to the wisdom of the flesh, than to the promises of God. For first although they see lande appeare a farre off, yet they knewe not whether it were shore or not. They are ignorant also, whether they should come among their friends or enemies: bycause many times it chanceth, that they that escape shipworacke, light in vnharberous Countreys, where they suffer more harme of the barbarous people, than of the sea, which otherwise is a most cruell element. Wherefore, the hope of succoure that they had it selfe so farre off, had ioynd with it no little feare. Agayne, when they had with all their might laboured to get to the shore, they ranne their Shippe into a place that had the sea on both the sides, where the foreship sticke in the sande, and the sterne with violence of waues splete in sunder. And heere the truth of Gods Oracle declareth it selfe, by the which it was foretolde that the Shippe should perishe, which yet seemed nowe lyke to come safe and sounde to shore. Howbeit this ship may be called a figure of those men, which contrary to the worde of God seeme happie in their wycked

Parali. 14.

They caste
their Corne
into the sea.The descrip
tion of the
Shipworacke.

The deuise
of the sould-
iers in kil-
ling the pri-
soners.

neise, as though they should neuer be punished theretore. For commonly suche men, when they seeme to haue escaped all daunger, haue a so dayne destruction, as diuerse examples of suche men do testifie. See what is written of these men. Psalme. 37. and. 73.

Thirddly, the Souldiours deuise to kill the prisoners, least any of them when he was gotte to shore should take hym to hys heerles. And out of doubt they were moued to take thys bloudy counsaile for feare of the Lawes. An example whereof wee hadde before in the Souldiours of Herode, whose handes Peter escaped by the guyding of an Angell. Actes. 12. Howebeit this is greate wickednesse, that they would not excepte Paule, or spare hys lyfe, throughe whose counsaile and prayers their lyfe was preserued. But this is the propriete of the worlde, and of all those that serue the worlde, that they quickly forgette benefytes and good turnes, and recompence them mooste tymes with haynous iniuries. Therefore they are very fooles, which seeke to please the worlde, and haue not rather a regarde vnto God, who is the onely and mooste faythfull rewarde of all men. Moreover as concerning the Souldiours deuise, the daunger that Paule and the others were now in, was more greuous than the Shipwracke it selfe, in so muche that all the prisoners were now in a mooste wofull case: and the promise of God seemed bayne, who had promised to saue them all. But the Lorde remedied thys inconuenience in tyme also. For the Captayne being desirous to saue Paule, withstoode the Souldiours deuise, so that it tooke not effecte. He commaundeth also, that as many as could swimme, should fynde take the Sea, and the residue follooe them vppon broken boordes and fragmentes of the Shyppe. Hereby wisely prouiding that they should not lette one another in the businesse and sturre. And so it came to passe that they all escaped alpye and safe vnto the shore, as God had promysed should come to passe. Heere the veritie of Gods promises is very notable, which we see can be hyndered by no aduersitie. Surely hitherto all thinges might seeme to haue conspired the death of Paule. For the Sea rageth with greate and mayne surges and waues. The winde armed the ayre also to their destruction. The earth holdeth faste the shippe, driuen and caried vpon hir. The lightes and starres of heauen withhold their shine from the miserable creatures. The false and vntrusty Maryners meane to runne away, and the cruel souldiours deuise in their minds a bloudy slaughter. But the truth of god, whose pleasure it was that they should be saued, ouercame all these things. Therefore these things ought to comfort vs also amyddest the daungers of this worlde. For experience teacheth vs, that the worlde fareth lyke a mooste troublesome Sea. But wee haue the promises of God, who hath assured vs by his sonne, to bee alwayes present and assistaunt vnto his people. Therefore if God be with vs, who can bee agaynst vs? For surely wee being in safetie vnder hys protection, shall happily escape through all troubles and daungers, and come to the haue of eternall blisse, where the euerlasting inheritaunce of the kingdome of heauen, is appoynted and prepared for vs by Iesus Chryste: to whome be prayse, honoure, power and glory, for euer. Amen.

The truthe
of Gods pro-
mise cannot
be let or hin-
dered.

The. xxviiij. Chapter vpon the *Actes of the Apostles.*

The. Clxxj. Homelie.

ANd when they were escaped, they knew that the Isle was called Melite, and the straungers shewed vs no little kindnesse, for they kindled a fire, and receyued vs euery one, bicause of the present rayne, and of the colde. And when Paule had gathered a bundle of stickes, and layde them on the fire, there came a Viper out of the hear, and caught him by the hand. When the straungers saw the beast hang on his hande, they sayde among them selues: No doubt this man is a Murtherer, whom though he haue escaped the Sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to lyue. And he shooke off the Viper into the fire, and felt no harme. Howbeit they wayted whē he should haue swollen, or fallen downe deade sodenly. But after they had looked a great while, and sawe no harme came to him, they chaunged their mynde, and sayde, that he was a God.



It hath bene declared hitherto howe God had a care of Paule and his Companions, as he promysed him in the midst of the daungers and tempestes of the sea. It foloweth, how he deliuered them afterwarde fro drowning, and howe he ministred an occasion to Paule to preach the Gospell, firste to those of Melite, and then vnto the Romans. Whereby we are taught, that Gods works are perfite, and though we be tryed euery day with new daungers, that yet we must not cast away al hope,

but looke euery day for newe benefites at Gods handes, which bleseth to temper aduersitie with prosperitie, and to rayse by discouraged myndes, with effectuous consolation. It shall be profitable to consider euery thing in the order wherein it is described.

First, Luke declared into what Island they were cast alande, & how they of the Island receiued them. The Island was Melite, which now a dayes is called Malta, the place where the knightes of S. Johns order haue their residence, lying betwene Sicilia and Aphica: Luke commendeth the singular humanitie of the people of Malta, which receiued them & shewed them al kind of pleasure, according as the time & place required. Thus he hath set forth a notable example of loue & hospitalitie for vs to folow. For without doubt these wicked knightes were unknowne vnto the people of Malta, and there was no hope of recompence to be looked for at their hands, when they sawe

The hospitalitie of those of Malta.

Luke, 10.

Hebr. 13.

Mark, 19.

Paul by miracle was known to those of Malta,

Iglad ad
to at the
to at the
at theA tupper by
teth Paule.

saue spoyle of all their goodes. Yet because they see they be in myserie, and haue neede of their helpe, they shewe them this curtellie. And this is that thing that Chrysostome teacheth vs in the Parable of the Samaritane. Thus it behoueth vs all to do, without any respect of persons, by hope of rewarde to come, to be louing and charitable vnto those whom God sendeth vnto vs to be succoured and helped. And chiesly we must remember to be harberous vnto straungers, both for that they haue neede of many things, and also for that the Apostle witnesseth, that suche doing hath ben to the great commoditie of many, who sometimes haue receyued Angels into their houses in likenesse of men. But this is a farre more excellent and profitable thing, that they which bouchsafe to take straungers into their houses, make much of Chrysostome, and receiue him in them. And surely God vseth to recompence suche curtellie and benefites with temporall rewarde also. For when the Sodomites were overcome in battell by their enemies, and carried away as a bootie and pray, they were deliuered agayne by Abraham for Lot his sake. And not long after we shall heare how the people of Malta were by this occasion illuminated and lightned with the doctrine of the Gospel, because they so curteously intertayned these shipwrecked persons. I will now say nothing of our predecessors, who by reason of their hospitalitie in Heluetia, did purchase themselves singular prayse with all Nations: whose steppes if we follow, we shall also get vnto ourselves no small vtilitie and commendation. Here also let them seeke comfort, which suffer banishment for religions sake. For he that was able to get vnto Paule, and the other wretched wights, the good wils of the men of Malta, the same is able also to get vs friends in every place, because he hath the hartes of all men in his hande, with all the worlde obeyeth his commaundement. Therefore that promise of Chrysostome, which hath promised a tenfold rewarde to those which haue forsaken either house, either brethren and sisters, either landes, either friends, for his sake, and the Gospel, shall euery where be fulfilled.

But God would not haue Paule long to be unknown among the people of Malta, but straightway recomended him with a singular miracle, whereby he confirmed his apostleship, and offered him a notable occasion of preaching. It shall be good to consider euery circumstance hereof. Amongst the which Paule first, as it is written gathered by sickes together. And here let vs consider how Paule is builed in seruile occupations, who being worried with his bondes, and with the late daunger of tempest and shipwrecke, had yet occasion enough to haue taken his ease and rest. But he well knew, that in such a necessity as man might to seeke his owne quietnesse, but that all men, one with another, are bound (as much as in them lieth) one to helpe another. Therefore by his example the lay labbers of this world are repleued, who being profitable neither for themselves, nor yet for others, seeke to lyue each of them vpon the labours of other mens labours. Which though they glory in the name and praise of Christ, yet those they do little of Paules spirit, in the old that doctrine, or in their life, that it is manifest how they can abide Paules name, from whom they desire to be free in this world. For their Paule was in being by their sickness, a tupper, which by all means should haue beene with them, being retained with his hand, crept vnto Paule, and caught Paule by the hande.

hande. This veruy was a straunge and sodayne hazarde of life, where-
 with both Paule mighte greatly haue bene put in feare, and also gaue oc-
 casio to the people of Malta to haue a very euil opinion of him. For streight
 wayes they iudge he was some manqueller or murtherer, whom the ven-
 geance of God dyd persecute, and whom he purposed to punish with some
 straunge and rare example, although he escaped out of shipwacke. For the
 Gentiles sayne, that the goddesse ^{Διούα} which we cal Vltione or vengeance,
 is assistaunt with Iupiter, & punisheth men for their offences, being taught
 euen by the lawe and loze of nature, that God bleseth to punish sinnes. And
 where murther hath bene counted euen from the beginning of the worlde,
 the mosse haynous sinne of all others, they accused Paule of murther, ra-
 ther than of any other comon sinne, on whom they thought was shewed so
 rare and straunge an example. Let christian men here be ashamed of their
 crueltie, which followe and frequent warres for wages sake, and thinke
 it a commendable thing to shed innocent blood, wheras we haue beside the
 lawe of nature the oracles of God, which teach vs, that as many as hired
 with money shed blood, and affirme that landes polluted with murther,
 can be purged none other ways than by shedding the blood of murtherers
 agayne, are accursed. Deut. 27. Num. 35. In the meane season let vs marke
 in this place the wonderfull prouidence of God in gouerning the affayres
 of this world, which bleseth to set forth both his own glory, and the glory
 of his people, by those things chiefly which seeme mosse to let and hinder
 them. For Paule had ministred vnto him an occasion of preaching by that
 that seemed most to be to his reproch and slander. Thus it behoued, that
 Moses should first be thowen away, and banished out of the court, or euer
 he were appoynted to be the reuenger of the people. Wherof we haue ma-
 ny other lyke examples, the vse of which serueth partly bicause we should
 rashly condemne none, by reason of the afflictions they suffer: and partly
 bicause we should not to soone be offended with the aduersities that hap-
 pen vnto vs, seeing all things worke vnto the best for them that loue god.
 And those things that follow, teach vs that it so happened vnto Paule, for
 he beeing nothing afrayde with this soden chaunce, shaketh off the Viper
 into the fire, and felt no harme therof: yea by this means he findeth Chri-
 stes promise true, which saith, that those which would beleue should drine
 away serpents, and should drinke potions that had popson in them, & yet
 not be hurt. Mar. 16. Hereof also may be gathered a generall doctrine, that
 the old serpent hath no power agaynst them that beleue in Christ. For al-
 though he inuade both our hands & feete, and blowe the venome of sinne in-
 to our deuires & works, yet he can not bite vs to death, bicause we be hea-
 led with the stripes of Christ, who through the merite of his death, & ma-
 iestie of his resurrection, hath troden downe, & crushed his head to peres.
 But let vs retorne to the people of Malta, who seing Paule contrary to their
 opinion nothing hurt, knowing that the biting of a viper was most present
 popsoning, by and by altered their minde, and iudged him to be some one
 of the number of the gods: doubtlesse being deceived with the error of the
 Gentiles, which bled to take the authors of strange benefites, & workers
 of vntwonted effects & myracles, for gods. Thus Satan hyde them occu-
 pied in the consideration of secundary causes, lest if they had climbed higher
 they might haue come to the knowledge of the true God. And so with one

Paul shaketh
 off the viper
 without any
 hurte.

The people
 of Malta
 take Paule
 for a God.

The family
of Nocke of
Paule.

policy he thought both to get into the minds of the people of Malta, and to make Paule to be honored as a god, meaning to hinder the fayth of Christ, wherby he knew his kingdome was chiefly assaulted. For Satan wil suffer every mortal man to be honored & worshipped as a god, rather than the true god, unto whom only such honor is due. The cause is, that while men are occupied in honoring of others, they runne into manyest daunger of their saluation. But they that worship god only, casting away the yoke of the diuel, they finde true saluation. Let no man therfore maruell, that the worshipping of Saints, which we know were sometime the chosen vessels of God, is mayntayned in the Popes kingdome with false signes and diuelish disceytes. For it greeueth not Satan that they are worshipped & inuocated, so long as he seeth their doctrine not regarded, which maketh men to worship God only, and the inheritors of life. And surely Satan his craft & subtiltie is very great, who although he were constrained in Paules dayes to giue place: yet afterwarde he planted euery where among those of Malta a superstitious opinion touching Paule, by those who boasting in Paules name and Nocke, vse to worke many wonders, as well in killing as keeping vp of serpents. But their vngodlynelle is hereby easily confuted, in that they are so greatly delighted with serpents, which it is euident, was the first instrument wherewith the diuell beguiled man. Let vs marke in this place the inconstancie of the people, a lyke example wherof, but in an other order, we saw before in those of Lystra. For they toke him for a malefactor, & wold haue stoned him, whom at the first they sayd was a God. But these men accout and take him for one of the gods, whom a litle before they sayd was a murtherer. We haue many like thinges dayly falling out, which teach vs that the nature of the people is alwayes diuers and changeable. Fooles they are therefore, and miserable people, which thinke there is any trust to be giuen vnto them, and put not their hope in God onely, which hath giuen vs his sonne Iesus Christe to be an earnest reuenger of all euill done vnto vs: to whom be prayse, honour, power and glory, for euer. Amen.

The. Clxxij. Homelie.

IN the same quarters were lands of the chiefe man of the Ile, whose name was Publius, which receiued vs, and lodged vs three dayes courteously. And it fortuneth that the father of Publius lay sicke of a feuer, and of a bloudy fluxe, to whom Paule entred in, and prayed, and layde his hands on him, and healed him. So whē this was done, other also which had diseases in the Ile came, and were healed, which also did vs great honour. And when we departed, they laded vs with such things as were necessarie. After three monethes, we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintred in the Ile, whose badge was Castor and Pollux. And when we came to Syracuse, we tarried there three dayes, and from thence we fet a compassse, and came to Rhegium. And after one day the Southwinde blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli, where we founde brethren, and were desired to tary with them seuen dayes, and so came we to Rome.

Notable



Notable and full of comfort verily is that sentence of Iesus Christ, which sayth: There is none that forsaketh house, or brethren, or sisters, or parents, or wife, or children, or lands for my sake and the Gospels, but shall receiue an hundred folde now in this lyfe with persecutions, and in the world to come life euerlasting. And hereof Luke setteth vs out an euident example in this historie. For Paule, who for Christs sake and the gospels, had forsaken al things which are counted excellent and profitable in this world, and now from shipwreck was escaped into the Isle of Malta, found by & by innumerable brethren, sisters, parents, and most faithfull friends, with whom he had both house, and lands, and all kinde of goodes in common. Yea, he that by reason of his bandes seemed most miserable of al men, in that shipwreck was of such estimation with the people of Malta, that for his sake they pleased both the matiners, the souldiers, & the prisoners, & all the residue of Paules company. And this shal appeare more playnly by those things that follow. For there is set forth in Publius, which was the chiefe man, or gouernour of the Ilande, a singular example of hospitalitie. For he at his farmes which were there nere adioynning, curteously entertayned them for three days togither. And his humanitie is the more notable, for that being a ruler & a rich man, he yet disdained not strangers, in such manyfold afflictions, as rich men for the most part vse to do, which think other mens mischaps appertayne nothing vnto them. Then next, for that he receiue them al togither, which could not be without some trouble & very great cost. For we heard how there were in that ship two hundred, three score & sixtene persons, and al escaped safe vnto lande. Let rich men, & they that be in authoritie lerne here their dutie, not to thinke that God hath giuen to the alone so great gifts: but let them remeber that they are appoynted but stewards. Wherefore let them be liberal vnto those that haue neede, so that their plenty may releue the others scarcety. And doubtlesse this is a great offence of them, which forgetting their dutie, haue compassion on no body, but passe ouer the cry of the poore with deaf eares, who at length, according to the saying of Salomon, shal find the eares of god shut to their prayers: yea at the latter day they shal haue Christ to accuse them.

Furthermore, the people of Malta receiue a notable recompense & amends for their hospitalitie, and that by the ministry of Paule. So that we may learne, there is no man so byle but may procure vnto vs great vtilitie, so that we shew our selues curteous & liberal vnto him. For God can requite vs by any man, & their reward bleseth not to be lost, that for gods sake, or for Christs, vse to benefite any body. In this present place are declared two rewardes, which these men receyued of Paule him selfe. First, the father of Publius receyued, who beeing sicke of a feuer, and of a bloudy fluxe, a disease vtterly incurable, was restored to health by Paules meane. That this was a great benefite and pleasure, if wee consyder but the body onely, no man can denie, althoughe wee say nothing, howe by this occasion he was brought vnto the sayth. Where we muste marke howe in this cure Paule obserued the manner and order prescribed of Christe. For bothe he bleseth prayer, and layde hys handes vpon the sicke body. Whereby we are taught, that this miracle was not wrought through the power of Paule, but of God, which after this sort woulde set

Marke. 10.

The hospitalitie of Publius.

Math. 25. The reward of hospitalitie.

forth his same Iesus Chryst, as Peter and Iohn haue before declared. For the Apostles wrought their miracles farre otherwise than Chryst, which vsing his absolute power by his worde onely pronounced, drave away deuils and diseases. But the Apostles and other holy seruantes of Chryste did the same, by calling on the name of Chryste. Here is the errour of those men confuted, which bycause of the Miracles that holy men wrought, thinke they ought to be inuocated, and do not regarde how God is the author of them, whose honour and glory the Saintes chiefly sought. See more concerning this matter in the thirde and fourteenth Chapters. The seconde worde extended vnto more men. For the same of Publius father beeing healed, stirred by other men also, so that they lykewise were deliuered from diuers diseases. The ende and ble of all these things was, that they shoulde vnderstande Paule was the Minister of Chryst, which deliuereth vs from infirmitie both of body and soule: and that we should therefore seeke all saluation in his merite. But bycause we haue intreated here of oftentimes in other places, let it now suffice briefly to haue touched these things.

The thank-
fulnesse of
the people
of Malta.

But let vs see the people of Malta, who Luke sayth, requited with great thankfulness such great benefites. For they also both greatly honoured them, and when they should departe, gaue them whatsoeuer things were needefull vnto their voyage. These are manifest frutes of fayth, by the which we are also taught what we owe vnto them, by whose meane Chryst and the light of the Gospell shineth vnto vs. For where we ought to esteeme them as our parents, because we are regenerated through their ministerie, they deserue to be honoured: yet not with godly honour, but with such as we owe to our parents, and with such as it is mete for man to receyue of man. And surely Paule writeth, that the Elders which gouerne well, are worthy of double honour, 1. Timoth. 5. Marke then I pray you, and God will, what ieoly gospellers they be that thinke them selues trim men, when they can steine the good name of Ministers with scoffes and quippes. And as children owe vnto their parentes not onely honour, but also necessities whereby to liue: so is it necessarie that the hearers prouide the ministers of the same. This God commaunded in tymes past in the olde Testamente, as may be seene in the eighteenth Chapter of the booke of Numbers, and in the five & twentieth chapter of Deut. And Chryst forbiddeth his Apostles to cary money, or any other prouision with them, because they shoulde liue of the ministry of the gospel like other laborers. And if it had not bene right and lawfull so to haue done, then shoulde the Apostles haue offended, which receiued these things. But see more touching this matter in the first to the Corinth. the ninth Chapter. Therefore great is the vnthankfulness of those men in these dayes (to say no worse) who giuing nothing them selues vnto the ministers, enuie and craftily beguyle them of the things that other in times past haue giuen vnto them.

Math. 10.
Luke, 9
and, 10.

Paule is car-
ried in an
Isolatrours
shippe.

But after the ende of three Monethes they returne to their voyage agayne by sea, the course wherof let them seeke in the Geographers Tables, that desire to haue further instruction in euery suche poynt. We haue herein two things to obserue. The one is, that Paule and his company go on bord into a Shippe of Alexandria, which after the errour of the Gentiles was thought to be vnder the patronage and defence of Castor and Pollux.

Ther-

Through which example, many men counte imagerie and superstition among indifferent things, as though a Christian man, touching the outward conuersation, mighte ble them without offending of God. But wee must like wise consider, that Paule did not this of his owne accorde, but of constraint, neither also consented vnto wicked superstition, either winked at any thing for fauour of men. Therefore the example of Paule, maketh not for the defence of those dastardes, that ble to dissemble in matters of religion, to serue the time. The other is, howe after they had sette a long compasse about by the sea, they arriued at length from Syracusa a Citie of Sicile in Italie. And at Putești they finde brethzen or christians, with whom at their entreatie, they taried seuen dayes. Where also may be seene, the charitie of those brethzen, which did bouchsafe at their great charges to chearise and make much of straungers so long a while: and also the curtelie of the captaine and souldiours, which for a prisoners sake, would stay so many dayes. Here appeareth also, the might and power of God, which maketh his seruantes to be accepted and fauoured, and the maiestie of the Sainetes, which cheefely triumpheth vnder the crosse and afflictions. For now Paule though he were in bandes, yet like a King and Emperoure, hath souldiers obedient at his becke, and commaundement. The like wee haue seene also, many times befoze, and the Euangelistes teache vs, that the Baptist made Herode afraide. Why then are we offended at the crosse and afflictions? Let vs rather constantly followe our vocation, seeing the hande of God is able to defende vs in the middelt of oure enemies, and looke for a rewarde in heauen, which oure sauoure Iesus Christ hath purchased vs through his merite: to whome be praise, honor, power, and glory for euer. Amen.

The church
at Putești.

The. Clxxiiij. Homelie.

And from thence, when the brethren hearde of vs, they came to meete vs at Appiforum, and at the three tauernes. When Paule sawe them, he thanked God, and waxed bolde. And when we came to Rome, the vnder captaine deliuered the prisoners to the cheefe Captaine of the hoste. But Paule was suffered to dwell by himselfe, with a souldioure that kepte him. And after three dayes, Paule called the cheefe of the Iewes together, and when they were come, he saide vnto them: Men, and brethren, though I haue committed nothing againste the people or lawes of the Elders, yet was I deliuered prisoner from Ierusalem into the hands of the Romanes, which when they had examined me, would haue let me goe, bicause there was no cause of deathe in me. But when the Iewes spake contrary, I was constrained to appeale vnto Cæsar: not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause then haue I called you, euen to see you, & to speake with you: bicause that for the hope of Israel, I am bounde with this chaine. And they saide vnto him: we neither receiued letters out of Iewrie pertaining vnto thee, neither any of the brethren that came, shewed or spake any harme of thee. But we will heare of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this secte, we knowe that euery where it is spoken against.



Al Paules affaires done in the time of his Apostleship, are very notable, and for many skilles singuler: yet the chiefe among them is, his bringing out of Iewrie vnto Rome, with so great a preparation, there to plead Chrystes cause & the christian faith before Caesar. For how rare and insolent a thing this was, in the iudgement of the world, it shall easily appeare, if a man compare Paules persone, bearing of small account and reputation, yea hated & enuied almost of all men, with the maiestie of Caesar, and the whole Romane Empire, wherof all nations and people stood in feare. For it could neuer haue beene brought to passe, by any meanes of man, that either the Romane Presidents should haue taken so greates paines in suche a mannes behalfe, or that Nero the Emperour, a man wholly set on fire with voluptuousnesse and tyrannie, should haue suffered suche an one to haue come in his sighte, or to heare him, onlesse God had mightily stretched out his hande, whose affaires all these things in doing were. This was the cause that Luke described all this voyage so diligently, which the Lord, for many causes would haue notified that the fame and report of Paule going before, should excite and stirre vp the mindes of the Romanes to heare him. And this present place teacheth vs that the successe of Gods deuise was not in vaine, wherein many other things recourse, the consideration wherof is able singularly to instruct and comfort vs.

The Ro-
mane bre-
thren, goe
out to meete
Paule.

For Luke wyrteth that the Brethren came oute of Rome vnto Appiforum, and to the place called in the vulgare tong Tipergote, whome when he saw, he gaue thanks vnto God, and conceiued thereby a greater boldnesse of minde. In this place, aboue all other things, wee haue to consider God, by whose dispensation it is certaine, all these things came to passe. For it pleased him, that his Seruaunte should bee confirmed by the meeting of these Brethren, that hee mighte afterwarde the more boldly wade thorough with Chrystes cause. Whereunto also is to bee referred that wee heard laste, touching the Brethren of Puteoli. For althoughe Paule was bolde inoughe, and ready to suffer, not onely bondes, but deathe also, for the name of Chyste: yet was hee a man, and wanted not his temptations. And surely hee mighte well haue feared, that hee should haue laboured in vaine in Chrystes cause, in suche a Citie whereas vngodlynnesse and tirannie reigned. God therefore to plucke this care oute of his minde, moueth these Brethren to goe and meete him, that hee mighte see howe there wanted not suche, as hee mighte confirme by the Example of his constancie, and as would helpe him with their Prayers in this conflict. Lette vs therefore bee encouraged by this Example, and constantly holde on in our vocation. For neither shall the godly zeale of Gods woorde want his feute, nor God himselfe faile vs, who can most easely gette vs euery where suche as will take parte with vs, bothe in laboures and daungers.

The thank-
fulnesse of
the Romane
brethren.

Againe, the brethren at Rome, are also to be considered. For we knowe how Paule wrote an Epistle vnto them before these things came to passe, in the which hee declareth abundantly, bothe his good will towardes them,

them, and promiset that hee woulde come vnto them. Therefore for this good tourney sake, they shewe themselves thankfull vnto him, although there were manye things that mighte haue discouraged them therefro. For firste, hee cometh with no pompe or worshipfull traine: but is broughte bounde like a malefactoure with other prisoners. Who woulde not haue beene ashamed of suche a man? Or who woulde not haue feared some daunger by companying with him? Againe, it was a thing of it selfe daungerous among the Romanes, to professe the Christian faith and Religion, which during the raigne of Tiberius (as Tertullian wyrteth) was condemned by publike statute and decree.

Furthermoze, these that mette him, were not onely in daunger, but the whole Congregation at Rome beside, for whome by this occasion, moze diligent, and earnest searche and inquisition myghte haue beene made. But howsoever these matters wente, they thoughte it meete to declare theyr duetie of loue, to suche an Apostle which trauailed so earnestly in the behalfe of all menne: and therefore they had leuer to incurr any daunger, than to bee founde slacke in dooing their duetie. These things teache vs what we owe vnto the Ministers of Chryste, by whose ministerie wee are broughte vnto saluation, if at any time they happen to be in daunger for their faith and doctrine. Lette vs not bee ashamed of them beeing in bandes, forasmuche as wee knowe that Chryste was bounde, and that the woorde of God can not bee bounde. Againe, hee will heereafter accepte it as bestowed on him, that is bestowed on them. At length, wee haue to consider Paule hymselfe also, of whome there are two things affirmed.

Firste, hee giueth thanks vnto God, which is not so to bee vnderstanded, as though hee hadde lette the brethren passe, and not once spoken vnto them. For whereas their good wil coulde not bee but acceptable vnto him, it is no doubte, but that hee also gaue thanks vnto them. But chiefly he acknowledgeth the woork of God, which stirred vpp thei myndes to shewe them selfe so bolde. Thus it becommeth vs also to doe, to be thankfull vnto men, and to recompence them as muche as in vs is: yet so that wee forgette not God, vnto whome it behooueth vs to ascribe all goodnesse.

The seconde is, howe Paule is confirmed a freche with newe boldnesse, when he seeth what betwix and beholders hee is like to haue in his conflict. Wherby it appeareth, that holy men also, haue neede to be confirmed, as Chryste teacheth by the example of Peter and the other disciples. For where he saith, he had prayed for Peter: hee addeth by and by, and when thou art conuerted, strengthen thy brethren. They likewise which seeme moste perfecte men, haue neede also of doctrine and admonition, of exhortation and reprehension. Therefore great is the ignorance and intollerable confidence of those, which forgetting they are men, reiecte wyth great lothsomnesse, all kinde of doctrine and correction.

Moreouer, when they were come to Rome, the Centurion deliuered Paule with the other prisoners, to the Captaine of the hoste. But not all after one sorte. For Paule was not put in prisone, but was at his libertie, to dwell in a priuate house, which he hired for himselfe, kept by one soldioure onely. Heere reason requireth we should speake somewhat in com-

mendation

Paul is encouraged or confirmed by the meeting of the brethren.

Paul is kept in an hired house at Rome.

commendation of the Centurion, whome hitherto, wee haue serue bare Paule so muche good will. But cheefely let vs consider howe God gaue him the good will of this Captaine, as he did before get him the fauoure of Lyfias the Captaine, of Felix, of Festus and others. Heere haue wee cheefely to consider the state of the godly. For in the worlde wee see commonly, they are reputed among the wicked, as it chaunced also vnto Christ. Yet in the meane season, Christe had he suche a care of them, that they wanted nothing that serueth either for their owne sauegard, or to the setting forth of gods glory. For to this ende is Paule permitted to dwel by himselfe, hauing but one souldioure only, appointed to watche him, which is not so muche his keeper, as a faithfull defender. Where also we see, that he lacked nothing that belonged to his liuing. Furthermore, he had libertie to comfort other Churches abroad, by his Epistles or letters, and also to call whome hee would vnto him, yea, to gather a Church or congregation together in his lodging, as most euidently shal appeare by those things that now follow.

Paule calleth together the cheefe of the Iewes.

For three dayes after, calling before him the cheefe of the Iewes, he reporteth vnto them, bothe his imprisonment and appeale, which was the occasion, that afterwarde euery day, more and more people resorted vnto him: to whome hee preached the Gospell. It is a singular example of kindenesse and loue, that is set forth in Paule. For howe many, and howe heynous iniuries the Iewes had done vnto him, was wel knowen. They also were the only authours of the bonds he was in: yet hath he still a care for their saluation, and doth boushly call them, and render a reason of his doings vnto them. It is therfore most true that he wyrteth, howe he prayed daily for them, and wished to be seperated from Christe, so they might be saued. Let vs folow the affection of so godly a minde, and according to the rule of Christ, loue euen our enemies, and learne with all diligence, to procure and set forward their saluation.

Rom. 10. 9

Math. 5

1. He putteth away wrongfull suspicions.

Howbeit, as touching Pauls oration, it consisteth of such partes, as we shal in order consider. First he answereth the wrongfull suspicions wherewith hee knewe hee was charged, as a seditious disturber of the Iewes publike peace, and as one that had wickedly broken and infringed the ancient religion of the fathers, but he moste constantly denieth them bothe: where he saith he did nothing, neither against the people, neither against the ordinaunces of the elders. Thus, by his example, he teacheth that it is lawfull for Christian men, to defend their cause and good name against slanderers, least peraduenture for their sakes, the doctrine of the Gospell be euill spoken of. This also is well to be marked, that the Ministers of Christ, neither offend against the publike peace, nor against the religion of the fathers, while they beat downe the superstitious affiance that men haue in ceremonies and workes, and faithfully teach Christes true religion. For the publike peace is not disturbed or broken, with the lawfull reprehending of wickednesse, but with wickednesse it selfe, as the Prophets euery where declare. Again, it is euident that the faith which stayeth and resteth vpon Christe only, is the auncientest faith of all other. Therefore, they that labor to restore that faith againe, and to purge it from the superstitious traditions of men, are falsely accused of noueltie.

2. He erreth in his appealing.

In the second parte, he rendreth a reason why he appealed vnto Caesar: which thing might haue gotten him great hatred among the Iewes.

For

For they that appealed, seemed partly to allowe the authoritie of the Romanes, against the libertie of the Jewes: and partly, it is of it selfe a shame, and toynd with the reproche of the iudge, to appeale vnto another. Therefore, because they should suspecte no such thing in him, hee saith hee was constrained so to doe, not that hee ment to accuse his nation before Caesar, but for the sauegarde of his owne life, which contrary to all right and equitie, the Jewes of Ierusalem lay in waite to haue. Where also wee are admonished, that ciuill or lawfull defence, is not denyed to Christian men, although Christe forbiddeth vs to resist euill. For this ought to be vnderstanded of priuate reuenge, which although he we be forbidden, yet the vse of lawes, and lawfull iudgements, is graunted vnto all men: the which who so taketh away, he must needs also abrogate and take away all manner of Magistrates and Officers.

The thirde parte, comprehendeth the state of the whole controuersie betweene him and the Jewes: for the hope of Israell (saythe he) am I bounde with this chaine. Thus hee calleth Christe, in whome the Jewes hoped for a kingdome and libertie, although they rightly knewe hym not, while they dreamed of a worldly kingdome, and of the libertie of the flesh, by wrongfull vnderstanding the Prophetes, which thing was the cause that they persecuted him whome they hoped for, which God sente vnto them. This is a very common thing in the affaires of saluation, for they that bragge of the name of Christe, will wickedly refuse him, when they thincke they shall lose any gaine by him, or perceiue the libertie of the flesh bridleed by him. In the meane season, this manner of Pauls speaking, teacheth vs, that there is none other hope of saluation giuen vnto man, but that which is in Christe Iesus. For in him are all the promises of God exhibited and fulfilled. Him onely the fathers wayted for. Moses and the Prophetes sent vs vnto him. And the Apostles knewe none other Sauoure: in whome if wee also putte oure truste, we shall not be deceyued.

Nowe followeth the Answer of the Jewes, which standeth in two pointes. For firste, they giue a notable testimonie of Pauls innocencie, whereas they say, they neither receiued letters from any man, nor hearde by reporte any thing of him. For what shoulde the Priestes wryte any thing of Paule, whose innocencie they knewe all men perceyued? In the meane season heere appeareth the state of the godly, which thoughte they bee neuer so innocent, yet easily finde enemies, by whose procurement they are either cast in prison, or else banished their country. And whether of these two come to passe, the enemies being afterwarde carelesse, passe not, neyther is there any man which thinketh the care of suche persones belongeth any thing vnto him. And at lengthe they conceiue farther hatred againste them, and goe about to put the innocentes vnto death also. In the second part, the Jewes shew themselves desirous to heare Pauls iudgement, concerning the faith and religion of Christe, although they knewe that all men euery where spake against it. And surely it is worthy of great commendation, that they are not so blinded with the former iudgements of other men to reiecte all declaration, and recoumpte of faith, as now a dayes many be to doe: who like Serpentes stoppe theyr eares, and so shutte the doore of the kingdom of heauen vpon themselves: whome

3. He declar-
eth the state
of the whole
controuersie.

The Iewes
beare wit-
nesse of
Pauls in-
nocencie.

if none other reason be able to moue, let them at least be ashamed, in that we see the Jewes more indifferent and byright iudges in suche matters. But heere we haue specially to consider the state of the Gospell, which in all ages, euery where hath bene spoken against. For the Deuil, the Prince of this worlde, cannot suffer the doctrine of Christe, bicause Christe moste mightily subdueth his kingdom. Likewise naughtie and wicked persons, abhorre the light thereof, bicause they knowe it reprobeth theyr wicked workes. And the iusticiaries and hypocrites flee from the same, as a thing that defecteth our naturall corruption, and ouerturneth the confidence of all mannes rightuousnesse. Wherefore it cannot be chosen, but it shall haue enemies on euery side. But this serueth bothe for our learning and comfort. For it stirreth vs vp, to prepare our selues to the conflict. And that we promise not our selues sluggishe idlenesse. Againe it teacheth vs, that the power of the Gospell is of God, & invincible, which hath bene able so many yeares, to withstand the attempts of the worlde, & the Prince thereof. For if a man woulde consider all other religions that euer were in the worlde, he shal perceiue that they haue falne of their owne accord, and haue come vnto nothing, althoughe no man euer assaulted them with force of armes. But the Christian religion, which is drawne out of the gospel, hauing had in all ages most fierse enemies, which hath persecuted it with fire and sword, endureth yet vnto this day, and shall endure vntill the later day, when Christ shal come vnto iudgement, to recompence the afflictions of his people with eternall ioy, and to reward his enemies with condigne paines for their wickednesse. Let no man therefore be offended with the stubbernesse of them that speake againste it, or with the fury of them that persecute it. For Iesus Christ, the Bridegrome of the Church liueth and reigneth, who can most easily deliuer his out of the hands of his enemies. To him be praise, honor, glory and power for euer. Amen.

The. Clxxiiij. Homely.

And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging, to whome hee expounded and testified the kingdome of God, and preached vnto them of Iesus, both out of the lawe of Moses, and out of the Prophets, euen from morning till night. And some beleued the things which were spoken, and some beleued not. But when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paule had spoken one woorde: well spake the holy Ghoste by Esay the Prophete vnto oure Fathers, saying: Go vnto this people and say: with your eares shal you heare, and not vnderstande, and with your eyes shal you see and not perceyue: for the heart of this people is waxed grosse, and with their eares haue they had no lust to heare: and their eyes haue they closed, least they shoulde see with their eyes, and heare with their eares, and vnderstand with their hearts, and should be conuerted, and I should heale them. Be it knowne therefore vnto you, that this saluation of God is sent vnto the Gentiles, and they shal heare it. And when he had said these words, the Iewes departed from him, and had great dispicions among themselves.

Although



Althoughe the Ministers of Iesus Christ, and Preachers of the Gospell, are exercised with diuers tribulations, and are many times imprisoned and layde in bandes: yet the worde of God can not be bound or shutte in prison, bicause the spirite of Christ breatheth where it pleaseth him, and is not subiecte to the will or pleasure of man. Yea as the doctrine of Christ throughe his death was the further enlarged, as hee promised it should come to passe: so also it encreaseth throughe the afflictions and punishments of the Ministers. An euident example heereof, is sette forth in the Historie of Paule. For although he had heretofore preached the Gospell abroad in many places of the worlde: yet was there a greate doore opened vnto him being a prisoner, and in chaines: in that hee was permitted freely to preache vnto all men in the Citie of Rome, as it were in the sight and vpon the stage of all the world, and that with suche successe, that his doctrine pierced into the Emperors court also, as may be gathered by the salutations or greetings sent to the Philippians. Phil. 4. Surely it was a straunge and very wonderfull thing, wherin men might consider the prouidence and power of Christ, but that they will be blinde in the cleare light. Furthermoze Luke declareth howe this thing came to passe, and out of many Sermons he cholet one, whereby we may iudge of all the other. But we shall speake of all the circumstances in order.

First, the Euangelist noteth the time and place, saying: they resorted to Pauls lodging, vpon a day appointed. For at those dayes it was not permitted christians to haue any churches: neither though they had had churches, had it bene lawfull for Paule to haue taught in them, being a prisoner and in bondes. Therefore as in other places the Apostles preached in priuate houses: so heere also Paule assembleth them in the house which he had hired, wherby we gather, that the worchip and doctrine of god ought not so to be tyed to any place, as though it helped or auailed any thing to saluation. For it is euident that the worde of God hath the authoritie of it self. Also God heareth prayers in euery place, so that we pray in faith, and lifte vp cleane handes vnto him. Wherefore, if necessitie bidge vs, we nede be carefull neither for time nor place. Howbeit when we enioy peace, and haue Christian magistrates, then we must haue a regard vnto order, which requireth bothe time and place. Therefore the examples of the primitive Church doe nothing defende the furious clamours of the Anabaptistes, bicause necessitie in times passed compelled them in their assemblies, to doe diuers things contrary to our vsage.

Secondly, heere is declared the argumente of Pauls sermon, with the order of teaching that he vsed. For he expounded the kingdome of God, testifying and preaching vnto them Iesus Christ. But by the kingdome of God, we haue oftentimes said the Gospell is vnderstanded. And hereof Paule coulde not very well intreate, but he muste also confute the erreure of the Jewes, which of the Prophetes wrongfully vnderstoode, dreamed that the kingdome of their Messias should be worldly. Wherefore they were to be taught that that kingdome was spiritual, the beginning wherof in this world, is the whole regeneration of man, & the newnesse of life, & the marke & end thereof eternal felicitie, which is prepared for vs in heauen. And bicause the Jewes knewe not the author of this kingdome, he

Paule pre-
cheth in an
house.

The argu-
mente of
Pauls ser-
mon.

did teache them that Iesus Christe was hee: vnto whome according to the office of an Apostle, he beareth witnesse plainely, and also exhorted all men to receiue him. Let vs heere obserue, how the doctrine of the gospell, is called the kingdome of God: verely, of the ende and effecte thereof. For it offreth vnto vs bothe the kingdome of God, and true felicitie, and bringeth vs vnder the rule and gouernance of God, while it subdueth all our reason and vnderstanding, vnder the obedience of faith. Heere as many, as glory in the name of the Gospell, are warned of their duetie. Let them remember that the kingdome of God is preached therein, and therefore lette them haue a care that God may raigne in them, that the kingdome of the Deuill may bee abolished, which we knowe Christe came in the flesh to destroy. Againe, the Ministers are admonished of the true trade and way of preaching the Gospell, vnto the which these three things are necessary. First, they muste declare and open the mysteries of this kingdome, that the simpler sorte bee not seduced by false imaginations. Then they muste beare witnesse of Iesus Christe, that all men may vnderstand, howe hee is the aucthoure of this kingdome, and of true felicitie. Finally they muste instantly exhorte and persuaade men, that they despise not the saluation offered in Christe.

The fountaine of the Apostles doctrine,

Thirdly, is declared the fountaine whence this doctrine springeth. For Paule reasoneth of Christe, oute of the lawe of Moses and the Prophetes, prouing that in him were performed, whatsoeuer things they foresawed of the promised sauoure of mankinde. Thus he folowed the example of Christ himselfe, which bled many times to bring testimonies out of them. This place teacheth vs, that no inuentions of man, but the worde of God comprehended in the scriptures, must be preached in the church. For wher the church is the householde of God, it is not meete that any other woorde should be heard therein, but the good mannes of the house. Which is the cause that all the Prophetes and the Apostles, are bounde vnto this commandement, as wee haue elsewhere declared. Therefore they are not a little to be blamed, who either teache other Doctrine themselves, or else heare and followe other: seeing this is the true marke of the Church, to heare the voice of hir husbände onely. See Psal. 45. Iohn. 10. Moreover let vs marke the consent bothe of the Olde and Newe testament, least wee say (as some brainlicke persons doe) that the same belongeth nothing vnto vs: and yet they bothe teache one selfe same Christe, and one selfe same way of saluation, and wee knowe nothing was fulfilled in the newe Testament, but the same was promised in the olde. Whereby it also appeareth that the faith of Christe is of moste antiquitie, and is the onely way and meane, whereby all the electe, from the beginning of the worlde, haue bene saued. But bicause wee haue oftentimes otherwheres intreated heereof, it may suffice for this time, to haue brefely poynted to these things, as it were with the finger.

Psal. 45
Iohn. 10

Paule teacheth all the whole day.

Fourthly, Luke declareth howe long Paule preached. Euen from the mornynge vntill the euening. Whereuppon wee maye gather that they also disputed, and that Paule answered theyr argumentes. For it is not lyke, that they which were as yet vtterly ignorant of Christ, woulde haue hearde Paule wyth suche patience, but that they woulde sometime haue interrupted him in his saying. In the meane season heere

is expressed an ardent desire, bothe in Paule, and in the hearers, whereof we had a like example before in the twentieth chapter. This reproveth the slothfulnesse of our dayes, wherewith both diuerse Ministers of the word, and hearers also are sicke and accursed, who thinke all labour and time to muche, that is spent at the sermons. But one day shall come that hunger of the worde, wherof we reade in the Prophet. &c.

Fifthly, the effect of so earnest and diligent a sermon is described. For some beleue, and some beleue not. Yea a great disputation or contention riseth amongst them. Here we see what case the gospel is in, in this world. For where Chryst is set vp as a marke or signe to be spoken agaynst: it can not be that all men can receiue the Gospel with vniforme consent. Let no man therefore be offended with the paucitie or fewnesse of beleeuers, nor with the ranke croppe of controuersies in these dayes, seeing we heare that in tymes passed, when the sonne of God him selfe, and the Apostles preached, there were fewe that beleued. Let this also serue to comforte ministers, when they see they haue little or nothing profited by their preaching. For then let them call to their minds that saying of Chryste: If they haue kept my worde, they will keepe yours also.

But Paule seuerely rebuketh their stubboznesse, and threatneth them with the horrible iudgement of God. For Chryste by his owne example teacheth vs to deale so with those, whom the milde and holeseme preaching of the Gospel can not moue, who many times rang in the eares of the Scribes and Phariseis greuous manaces, and that horrible wo. So Paule likewise, bicause he would not seeme to yeelde in any thing to the affection of the flesh, alleageth a Propheticall oracle out of the vs. of Esai, declaring that it was no rare or newe matter, that they so stoutly resisted the Gospel. For their fathers in times paste had done the lyke, and God had fortolde, that in the latter days, when the kingdome of Chryst should be reuealed, men should do the lyke also. Thus he confirmeth those that were weake in the fayth, whom the multitude and authoritie of the gainsayers might haue hindred and offended. And herewith also he feareth other, in that he sayth, God had long agoe ordeyned a punishment for them. This place of Esai is very notable, and is the ofteneft cyted and alleaged of any other in the new Testament. For all the Euangelists make mention heereof. Mathew in the thirtenth, Marke in the fourth, Luke in the eyght, and Iohn in the twelfth Chapiters. And Paule repeateth the same, in the tenth Chapter to the Romanes. Therfore we muste not thinke the consideration thereof superfluous. For it conteyneth in it three thynges greatly belonging to vs also.

First, the sinne of the Iewes is described, in that they wittingly and willingly are blinde, and despise the knowen light of the truthe: like vnto men, that hauing their perfecte sighte and hearing, make yet as if they were blinde and deafe. And that these were such, the Gospel in many places teacheth vs. Would to God these onely in times paste had bene suche, and that we had not euery where the lyke in our dayes also, who beeing conuincd, euen by the testimonie of their conscience, sayne yet as though they could not vnderstande the mysterie of the fayth. Yet here appeareth the brightnesse of Goddes woorde, which is so greate, that it mightily pierceth both the eyes and eares of men. For that worde which God hath

Amos. 7.

The effecte
of Pauls
Sermon.

Iohn. 15.

Paule rebu-
keth the
stubboznesse
of y^e Iewes.

The Iewes
vnbeleefe
was wilful.

The cause
of incredulitie.

set oute vnto vs as a Candle, is not darke and obscure. Theretore all the darkenesse is of man, a grosse and wilfull darkenesse, as the thinges following declare.

Secondly, the Prophet describeth the cause of this euill: namely, an hart waxed grosse. So calleth he the mynd which is indurate or hardened with naughtie affections, so that it can be moued with no admonitions or exhortations of men. All suche dooings as thys Chryste expresseth in the Parable of a mariage and Gestes bydden to the mariage, where in some hadde maryed a wyfe, some hadde bought Oxen, some other farmes, whereabout they beeing occupied, refused to come vnto the mariage. Heereby are vnderstanded suche men as beeing addicted to the flesh, and to earthly thinges, neglecte and despise thinges heavenly. Suche it appeareth the chiefe of the Jewes were, who had a greater regarde to their honour and aduantage, than vnto Chryst and the kingdome of heauen: and now a dayes there can scarce bee shewed any other cause of the Gospelles contempte, than for that menne studie every where to heape by ryches, and to fulfyll the pleasures of the flesh: so that they hadde rather lacke Chryste, than forsake these their desires. Thus it appeareth, that all they which perishe in their incredulitie, are inexcusable. For The lyghte is come into the worlde, and menne haue loued darkenesse more than it. &c. And Paule sayth, that a tyme shoulde come, when menne shoulde not suffer the doctrine of truth, but shoulde gette them selues false teachers, whiche shoulde speake thinges agreable to their fantasie and affections. It is euidente that this also hath bene these many yeres fulfilled, according to the Letter, and at thys day is so fulfilled, that a man shall fynde a greate many whiche shall confesse, that in the Gospell is taughte the true doctrine of fayth and Religion, and yet wyl preferre the Popishe Religion before it, both bicause it better lyketh the flesh, and also for that it is moze acceptable to the worlde. To speake nothing in the meane season of them which openly and with great clamour testifie, that they will neither heare nor suffer those that shall teach better or holesomer doctrine.

Iohn. 3.

The punish-
ment of in-
credulitie.

Howbeit the Prophete pronounceth the punishment that these men deserue, which is bothe manyfolde and horrible. For firste, they are not conuerted, that they may be healed. Therefore all hope of saluation is taken from them. For where there is none other way of saluation, than to turne vnto God, and to be at one with him, it can not be but that all they that disdayne the worde of God, wherby they are called vnto this holesome conuersion, and wherby the right way therto is taught them, must utterly fall from saluation. Wherefore it muste needes be, that they must perishe in their sinnes, as Chryste threatneth the Priestes of the Jewes. Then the next is, that this saluation is translated and caried vnto other. This god often threatneth vnto the Jewes, therby to mollifie their stony confidence. For where they were once adopted of God, and became his peculiars, they thought it was impossible that they shoulde fall from their dignitie. Yea they perswaded them selues that the kingdome of God muste fall, if God shoulde forsake them. Paule therfore teacheth them that this affiance of theirs is most bayne, bicause God could easily translate his kingdome whole & sound in all parts vnto the Gentiles. And this he affirmed

Iohn. 8.

not

not of his owne head, but as hauing a respecte vnto the Oracles of God, whereby it was long agoe prophesied, that it shuld so come to passe. Here vnto belong the things read in Deut. 32. They haue angered me with that which is no God, and prouoked me with their vanities. And I also will prouoke them with those which are no people. I will anger them with a foolish Nation. &c. See also what is sayde in Oseas, to this purpose. And Christ sayth also expressely: The kingdome of God shall bee taken from you, and giuen to a Nation which shall bring forth the fruites thereof. Nowe howe this came to passe and was verified, the whole order of this Booke abundantly declareth. And Paule in the tenth and eleuenth to the Romanes more at large sheweth. And least any man shoulde thinke the iudgement of God stayeth heere, wee muste also marke that an horrible destruction, bothe of the Citie and whole Nation, followed as Chrysostome sheweth, alsoone as the doctrine of the Gospell was taken from them, and caried vnto the Gentyles. These things are worthy to be diligently and continually obserued, that we also may learne hereby what to hope for, if we follow the Jewes and become unkinde vnto God, and wickedly warrele agaynst the doctrine of the Gospell, as they did. For God is constant in his iudgements, and the nation that doth the like he bleseth to punish with like iudgements. Ierem. 5. And there is no cause why wee shoulde thinke that the Gospell and kingdome of Christ shall faile, though we be forsaken, which persuation, as we sayde erewhyle, deceiued the Jewes. For God is able of stones to rayse vp children vnto Abraham. And there be diuerse coniectures which portende or shewe, that the Empire is lyke to retorne into the East, and that the West shal be in seruitude agayne, according to the opinion of Lactantius. Whiche thing, if it come to passe, we shall see the kingdome of Christ greatly increase among the Turkes, and perhaps among the Jewes also. Touching which thing Paule in the eleuenth Chapter to the Romanes seemeth to prophesie some things, not altogether obscurely.

But let vs retorne vnto Pauls hearers, which Luke sayth, were out, hauing begonne a great contention among themselves: While some helde on in struing agaynst the doctrine of truth, and other some labored to maintain the same. And here that sentence of Christ is fulfilled, which saith, he woulde sende a sworde and diuision, whereby it shoulde come to passe, that they which were before moste intier and familiar frendes, shoulde moste bitterly contende one with an other. Yet let no man thinke this happeneth through any default of the Gospell, seeing the ende thereof is to unite and knytte vs all together in Christ. Therefore all this cometh to passe through the naughtinesse of the wicked and reprobate. Whose propertie it is, the more earnestly they are bigged with the worde of God, the more to rage and become madde, as the examples of Cayn, Pharao, Achab, Zedechias, & others, do testifie. But because the godly which knowe it is their duetie to defend the glory of God against all men, can not yeld vnto these men, hereof burst out al these flames of contention. But by this present place it easily appeareth, Paule profited somewhat with these men, because there were that openly withstoode these wicked persons. For the word of God is neuer preached in bayne, because it is of it selfe fruitfull, and Christ hath in all places his people, which knowe his

Deut. 32.

Math. 21.

In his. vij.
booke, and. xv.
chapter.The conten-
tion of the
Iewes about
the doctrine
of the Gos-
pell.

boye.

boyc, and followe him. In the meane season we are taught our duetie, that if we will be godly and saythfull persons, wee muste constantly defende the quarell of truthe agaynst all men. For God requirerh suche worshippers as are seruent and ardent in zeale, no warmings and dastards, which can winke at all kinde of impietie, and can with patient minds and eares, suffer all the scoffes of the wicked, suche as a man nowe a dayes may finde a number, who for this cause thinke them selues moste worthy to be prayesd for, wyle men and modest. But in deede they bee very dullardes, and destitute of all sence of godlynesse, which are not prouoked with blasphemies: and fooles also, which so muche esteeme the friendship of the worlde, that they denie vnto Chryst the duetie of godlynesse. Therefore let vs prepare our selues to that holesome conflict and strife, which all the godly in this worlde muste suffer. For there is no cause why wee should feare the power of this worlde, forasmuche as we knowe we fight in his quarell, which one day shall breake in perces all the gaynelayers with a Scepter of Iron, which is the sonne of God, our Lorde and Sauour Iesus Chryste: to whome be prayse honour, power and glory, for ever. Amen.

The. Clxxv. Homely.

AND Paule dwelte two yeres full in hys lodging, and receyued all that came in vnto hym, preaching the kingdome of God, and teaching those things which concerne the Lorde Iesus with all confidence, no man forbidding him.



ur Lorde and Sauoure Iesus Chryste comforteth hys Disciples many times with this argument, that he will not leaue them destitute and succourlesse, but will be present with them vntill the ende of the worlde. The truthe of which promises appeareth euery where, aswell at all other times, as also chieflly in aduersities, for the is Chryst so nigh at hande vnto his seruantes, that not onely he defendeth them mightely and saythfully, but also directeth those thinges, which seme dolefull and infortunate vnto their saluation, and to hys glory. Wherein the captiuitie of Paule may bee vnto vs in steede of a number of testimonies. Whiche in the beginning mighte haue seemed vtterly to haue stopped the course of the Gospel, howbeit the Lorde so moderated it, that though the same the doctrine of the Gospel was rather aduanced, than hindred. For by the occasion thereof, bothe the Romane Presidents, and Souldiours heard the Gospel. And at length the preaching thereof fylled Rome, yea the iudgement place, and the Emperours court. But bycause these thinges haue bene spoken of before, other thynges whiche remayne to bee considered in this Hystorie muste brieely be runne ouer.

firste, the Euangelist expresseth the tyme of Pauls captiuitie, saying: that he abode two yeres together in an house, which he had hyred of hys owne charges, beeing garded with that Shouldiour, of whome we made mention before. And before that he lay in prison whole two yeres also, vnder Felix. And it is lyke, that there ranne some monethes betweene Felix his departure out of the Prouince, and the tyme of Pauls sending vnto Rome. Furthermore, wee muste allowe foure monethes at the least for his Nauigation and tyme that he spent in Malta. Thus Pauls captiuitie endured five yere, all which time he found this one commoditie, that he was not thrust into prison, but was in open warde, whereby he had occasion to preache euery where offered him. Heere wee haue to consider the state which the godly bee in, in this worlde, who alone for the most parte, are counted suche wicked persons as are vnmeete to enioy either libertie or life. But in the meane season, what a sorte of wicked and slaundersous menne, reioyce yee, lyued at their pleasure, vnder Nero, a moste tytous tyrante. But Paule alone, as if were some publike plague or calamitie of the whole worlde, is kepte in prison. The like curtellie the Prophetes in tymes past, and after them John the Baptist, and at length the sonne of God himselfe founde: who was put to death among theeues and murderers, and was counted a greater malefactor than Barrabas the murderer. The ende of all which thinges is, that we should not be offended at the lyke in these dayes. For it is not meete that the Scholers and seruantes state shoulde be better than the teachers and masters. Furthermore we knowe, that they which are partakers of Chrystes afflictions in this worlde, shall reigne with him hereafter in heauen. Here appeareth also the infinite goodnesse of God, which preserved Paule so long a tyme in open warde: verily for his electes sake, vnto whome by this occasion he woulde haue his Gospel to be reuealed. For this farre passed the hope bothe of Paule, and of all other the faythfull. Bycause vnder Nero, a moste vicious and cruell tyrant, no man woulde euer haue looked for the same. Here therefore, let as many as walke in Gods calling, fetch the counsaile. For as long as wee bee occupied in Gods affayres, and so as it is requisite for our saluation, God will easily defende vs, among moste cruell enemies: who was able to saue Noah in the middest of the waues of the floude, which ouerflowed all the worlde, and Ionas that lay hidde in the belly of the houghe Whale. And the same when tyme shall so require, will translate vs from all misfortunes into the internall kingdome of his sonne.

Furthermore, let vs see what Paule dyd in this two yeres spare: He receiued (sayth he) all that came in vnto him, preaching the kingdome of God, and teaching those thinges which concerne the Lorde Iesus with all confidence, no man forbidding him. He dyd then the same in bondes, which he had done before beeing at his libertie, bycause he vnderstoode he was now the Apostle and seruant of Iesus Chryst, aswell as before. And he dyd not onely preache, but also sent letters, now to one place, now to an other, and bothe instructed and comforted the congregations abroad, insomuche as if a man consider those times, we shall confesse we haue receiued more profite and commoditie by Pauls bondes, than of all his doings and sayings beside, while he went at libertie ouer al the world.

Paule was
in prison
two yeres
together.

2, Timo. 2.

Paule being
in prison,
preacheth &
writeth.

For those times may we take for those singular Epistles, written as the holy Ghost endited them, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, to the Hebrews, to Philemon, and the seconde to Timothe. Which the Church vntill this day hath kepte and preserved, as moste singular and precious Jewels. Howbeit many thinges mighte haue feared Paule either to haue written, or to haue taughte. For this doctrine was the cause he was put in prison. Also he alone trauayled in this quarrell at Rome. Likewise at the first meeting he founde the Jewes lyke vnto them selues, that is to say, stubborne and disobedient. Furthermore, that earnest desire that he had to write vnto forein nations might seeme to declare a minde somewhat inconstant and vniquiet. And it might be thought next neighbour to sedition, to teache and confirme men in that sayth and religion, which we sayde before, was condemned by the whole consent of the Senate. Againe, he was in daunger to be depriued at length of this libertie, and to haue had more bonds layde vpon him, & to haue ben cast into some inner prison and dungeon. And we muste not thinke, that he was so blockishe, that he did not perceiue and consider these thinges. But he that knew that he ought his life vnto Christe, coulde not by these perswasions be pulled from doing his duetie. And this is verily a wonderfull example, whereby we be taught how muche we owe vnto God, if at any tyme we perceiue we be holpen and defended by him in the middelt of dangers and aduersitie. For then we must be feared neither with dangers passe, neither with dangers present, or to come, but must be inflamed with greter zeale, that by our bolde defending the glory of God, we may owe our selues thankful to him accordingly. Therefore that reason of fleshy wisdom that many in these dayes follow, is playnly foolish and peruerse, which thinke we should hold our peace bicause of enemies & dangers on euery side appering, as though it were in enemies power to hinder or further the course of the Gospel. Nay it becommeth vs the more boldly to go forward with Gods quarrel, bicause we plainly find his truth & power so apparant in the middle of our dangers. But touching Pauls doctrine Luke sayth three thinges, which we must not let passe. The first is, what he preached: namely, the kingdome of God, wherof we haue intreted oftentimes before. And here by way of exposition he addeth: teaching those thinges which concerne the Lord Iesus. Wherby we gather, that then the kingdome of God is preached, when Christe is preached. For there is none other way to come vnto that kingdome, than the same which all the Scriptures with one consent shew vs to be in Christe Iesus. For he onely it is that hath destroyed the kingdome of the diuel, & the works therof, he onely is the mediator betweene God and vs. He onely hath put out the hande writing of sinne that was against vs, and purchased vs the good will of his father. Therefore it is not without a cause that he saith: No man cometh vnto the father, but by me. These thinges only are sufficient to disproue all other religions which shew vs the kingdome of God, or any way of saluation beside Christ. Secondly is declared, how Paule preached with al confidence or boldnesse, that is to say, plainely and freely, so that for fauour of men he cloked & dissimuled nothing. For he was not ashamed of the gospel of Iesus Christ, as he testifieth otherwheres. Neither feared he the tiranie of the world & prince thereof, bicause he had learned of a long time to wrastle therewith. And

verily

j. Paul preacheth the kingdome of God.

i. Timo. 2.
Colof. 2.
Mat. 23. & 17.
Iohn. 14.

j. Paule preacheth plainly.

verily Chryſt requirerh ſuch miniſters as will do his buſineſſe diligently, and leaue nothing vnto the worlde, nor to the wiſedome of the fleſh, which vnder a fayre pretence of modeſtie, bringeth in a daſtardly diſſembling of the truthe, and a denyall of the right fayth. Thirdly is declared the ſucceſſe that Paule had in his preaching. Which by this onely argument appeareth, was moſte prosperous or luckie, bycauſe there was none whiche forbadd him to preach. And this me thinketh is the greateſt miracle of all others, that God wrought to Paule. For alwayes before this tyme, wherſoeuer he came, he founde enemies, who either by ſecrete awaytes, or elſe by open force and ſedition, alwayes troubled him, and would hynder him in his teaching, and at lengthe draue him out of their Cities. But when he was brought to Rome as a priſoner, there he teacheth, beeing in bondes, where Nero, a monſter of mankind was Emperoure, where bothe the Chriſtian and Jewiſhe religion was hated and enuied, where all men were bewytched, either with the bayne ſuperſtition of the Gods, or with an Epicuriſus contempte of all religion. Where finally the diuell ſeemed to haue the chiefe ſee of his kingdome, there preached he Chryſte freely two yerres together, no man forbidding hym. Of whiche thing wee can ſetwe none other cauſe, but that God woulde bydle the mindes of all men with a mightie hande, that though all would not yelde to the doctrine of the Goſpell, yet they ſhoulde not be ſo bolde as to withſtande it. Thus in a Citie that was the Lady and maiſtreſſe of the worlde, the Apoſtle beeing a captiue, triumpheth by preaching Chryſte crucified, bringing many more vnto the obedience of Chryſte, than any Emperoure euer ſubdued. The lyke wee reade happened in tymes paſte, when Daniell, beeing ledde captiue to Babylon, defended the true Religion, bothe conſtantly and prosperouſly. And althoughe the chiefe of the kingdome were muche agaynſt it, yet firſt he instructed Nabuchodonosor, and afterwarde Darius, with ſome knowledge of the true God, and was the authour, that they dyd by publike proclamations ſpread farre and neare the honour and glory of God ouer all their kingdomes. Wherevnto alſo this deſerueth to be referred, that when the Romane Emperours vſed all kinde of outragious crueltie agaynſt the name of Chryſte and his Church, yet were there many tymes founde, even in their owne courtes, and among the chiefe of them, ſuche as greatly fauoured the Chriſtians, and openly defended the true religion. Some of which afterwarde, when the enemies of Chryſt were taken away, were aduanced to the Empire, as may be ſeene in the ſtorieſ of Iouinian and Valentinian the Emperours. Thus Chriſt declareth his power where a man would leaſt thinke. For it is no harde thing for him to bydle the willes of men; bycauſe he compaſſeth in the ſea with boundes, which cauſeth the ſame to lay down his ſwelling waues and ſurges. Therefore as many as are ſtrong in him, let them hope for his preſent ayde, and they ſhall neuer be diſappoynted of their hope.

Nowe what Paule dyd after the two yerres were expired, Luke dothe not declare, ending in this place his hystorie, according to the inſtincte of the holy ſprite, which would not haue the Church overcharged with too many writings or bookeſ: and therefore he hath written onely thoſe thingſ which may ſuffiſe for the inſtruction of our fayth and life. Howebeit out

iff. Paules
ſucceſſe.

Iob 38.
Ierem. 5.

What Paul
did after the
two yerres
were expi-
red.

of Pauls owne Epistles may some coniectures be taken, whereby it is declared what he afterwarde did. For in his seconde Epistle to Timothe, and fourth Chapter, he expresseth playnly that he pleaded his cause before the Emperour, saying he was deliuered through the benefite of God, when he was redy to be offered. And writing to the Philippians, among other things he sayth: I hope shortly to sende Timotheus vnto you, as soon as I shall see howe my matters will go, and I trust in the Lorde that I my selfe also shall shortly come. And writing to Philemon the Colossian, he sayth: Moreover prepare me a place to lodge in, for I trust that through the helpe of your prayers I shall be giuen vnto you. Agayne in the. xiii. to the Hebrues, he sayth: Pray for vs, and this I desire you the more instantly to do, that I may the sooner be restored vnto you. Knowe yee that brother Timothe is deliuered; with whome (if he come shortly) I will see you. Yet before he was led prisoner to Rome, he was minded to go into Spayne, as the Epistle to the Romanes in the. xv. Chapter declarerh. Of the which thinges men gather, not altogether without a cause; that he was set at libertie, and so returned through Grece, and Asia the lesser, into Syria, and when he had saluted the Castle Churches, wente through Italie and Fraunce into Spayne. Thus according to the opinion of these men, he preached the Gospell truely, after he was set at libertie: and at length being called backe to Rome agayne in the laste yere of Nero, losse his heade, and receiued the crowne of Martyrdom; when he had preached Christ vnto the moste parte of the worlde seven and thirtie yeres long together. But bycause our saluation dependeth not on such popytes as these, I will not contende herein ouer muche with any man. And we thinke they deserue not very much of Christian fayth and Religion, which labour in searching forth those thinges which the holy Scriptures haue passed ouer in silence. For in so doing bothe the Scriptures are more negligently handled, and the superstitious haue occasion giuen them to be occupied in doubtfull and vnprofitable questions, neglecting the doctrine of the Apostles; and so being bewitched with fables, do greuously erre in matters of faith and saluation. And surely, as God would haue Moyses sepulchre or buriall place, in times past vnknown, and the holy Ghost hath left fewe things in memorie in the olde Testament, touching the martyrdomes of the Prophetes: so in this present Treatise Luke hath described the ride but of two persons onely, namely of Stephen and Iohn the Apostle; being contented to say this onely of the residue, that they moste constantly preached, and confessed Christ in all kindes of aduersitie: To commending vnto vs the studie of the Apostles doctrine, which maketh men followers of the Apostles, and partakers with them of the heauenly inheritance. Wherefore we also in this place muste principally obserue and followe that feruent and continuall trauaile of Paule, in setting forth the glory of Christ. And wee muste not bee offended at his ends. For hereby Christ maketh those that worchippe him lyke vnto him selfe in this worlde; so that hee that hereafter they may bee partakers with him in heauen of his glory and kingdome.

A conclusio,
with a repetition
of the
premisses.

Hitherto we haue expounded this booke, according to the grace of God giuen vnto vs. We haue seene therein the forme, fayth, and doctrine of the primatine Church, which we also must keepe and obserue in these dayes.

if we

if we will be coumpted to be of Churle his Church. For we must giue no
 care vnto those, which say, that many things are necessarily required a-
 bout religion, and the way of saluation that the primatiue Church lac-
 ked. Whose rashnesse, or rather impudencie, I know not whether a man
 may more maruell at. For herrein they accuse the Apostles, either of neg-
 ligence, or of vntrustinesse: and feare not to prefer themselves before those,
 whose examples the holy Ghost hath set forth to all men that will be
 counted the members of Christ, and attaine to saluation in him to folowe.
 And who will thinke that they which continued whole eight and twentie
 yeeres, in the faith and religion taught by the Apostles, lacked any of
 those things, without the which saluation could not be obtained. But if
 they were saued without those things, which certaine boide superstitious
 persons afterwarde brought in, who will then deny vs saluation, which
 folowe their steppes? No man I thinke, but hee that is led with the mad-
 nesse and frensie of the Manichees, will accuse all this booke of falshode. We
 haue seene also the state, that the church is in in this world, being molested
 with continuall tribulations, whiles bothe open enimies and false bre-
 thren, bere and disquiet the same. We haue seene the vnworthy case that
 the Ministers are in, and howe slenderly the world requiteth them. We
 haue seene also the mighty hand and power of Iesus Christe, whereby he
 faithfully defendeth his Church in the middelt of the manes of persecuti-
 ons, and by the crosse of his seruantes, mosse gloriously triumpheth ouer
 the world and Prince therof. Let vs therefore diligently vse these things,
 to the instruction and confirmation of oure faith, that being strong in the
 same, and ouercomming al dangers, according to the example of
 the Apostles and primatiue Church, we may come to the
 inheritaunce of the kingdome of heauen, prepared
 for vs from euertlasting by Iesus Christe
 our King and Priest: To whome be
 prayse, honoure, power, and
 glorie for euer.
 Amen.

FINIS.

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don by Henrie Denham, dwel-

ling in Paternoster rowe, at the signe

*If I ought be said amisse, remember man it spake,
 If well, do thou alone (O Christ) the glory take.*

THE IVDGEMENT

of S. Hierome vppon the
Actes of the Apostles.

The Actes of the Apostles seme to set
forthe but a bare History onely, and to
wcaue as it were, the infancie and be-
ginning of the Church : but if we con-
sider, howe Luke the wryter of them
is that Phylition, whose praise is in the
Gospell, we shall at once perceiue eue-
ry woorde of him to be a medicine for
the sicke and languishing soule.

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